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AN
AMICABLE DISCUSSION
ON THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
AND ON
THE REFORMATION IN GENERAL,
DEDICATED TO THE
CLERGY OF EVERY PROTESTANT COMMUNION,

AND REDUCED INTO THE FORM OF LETTERS,

BY THE RIGHT REV. J. F. M. TREVERN, D. D.,

Bishop of Strasbourg (late of Aire.)

TRANSLATED BY
THE REV. WILLIAM RICHMOND.

Tunc demum vos Spiritum Sanctum habere cognoscite, quando mentem vestram,
per sinceram charitatem, unitati consenseritis hæere.

St. Aug. t. V. Serm. XXI. de Pentec.

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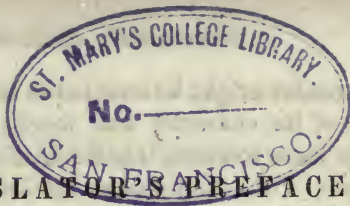
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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

The *Discussion Amicale*, a translation of which is now respectfully presented to the public, was first published in 1817,—a second edition appeared in 1824. The more than ordinary excellency of this controversial work has never been disputed either by friend or foe; and its substantial merit, original style and manner, and peculiar applicability to the English nation have for some years caused numerous highly respectable individuals to wish that it might appear in our own language. Latterly this wish has become more emphatically expressed, in consequence of the appearance of the *Difficulties of Romanism*, a work written by the great champion of Protestantism, the Rev. G. S. Faber, of Long-Newton, professing to be a fair exposure and complete refutation of the *Discussion Amicale*. As this book of *Difficulties* seemed calculated to give a very illusory idea of the general character of the volumes it attacked; as it evidently suppressed some of the most powerful arguments therein contained, and mutilated or distorted others; as it undeniably gave, in some instances, a most grossly false translation of very important passages, and on this false interpretation raised no small proportion of its arguments; it was thought very desirable that the Bishop of Strasbourg's original work should be fairly and strictly rendered into English, and thus appear in its own defence, that the purely

English reader might be enabled to form a more correct estimate of its character and merits. The translator here begs leave to state, that he has followed his author throughout with timorous scrupulosity, perhaps with servility; and that, if he has erred, he has done so involuntarily, his only object in undertaking his arduous task having been to aid the cause of truth, justice, and Religion.

DEDICATORY EPISTLE,

TO THE

CLERGY OF EVERY PROTESTANT COMMUNION.

GENTLEMEN,—

IN complying with the demand that is made for the publication of a Discussion undertaken and conducted in the secrecy of confidence, I cannot but be desirous of addressing it immediately to you. Indeed it seems to me most reasonable and just to present it, in the first instance, to those members of the Reformed Communions, who, while they are more particularly interested in becoming acquainted with its contents, are also, by their superior attainments, better qualified to decide upon its merits. Now therefore it shall go forth to the world, with the hopes that it may find access to its most desired destination. May it speedily appear before you, to undergo its first examination and receive its first judgment at your tribunal. Whilst I bespeak your indulgence for the defects and imperfections you will discover in the style and manner of the work, I am bold to defy your most rigid and unsparing scrutiny as to its matter and substance. This may look to you like presumption: but assuredly it is not so: for never were quoted with more feeling conviction those words of the apostle—‘Not that we are sufficient to think any thing of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God.’ (2 Cor. iii. 5.) I feel the full force of this passage: it penetrates to my heart; it alone inspires me with courage and confidence.

If, Gentlemen, you would take the trouble to study the character of your first Reformers, as depicted mutually by themselves, you would join with us in no longer considering them as men raised up by God to repair the ruins of his Church: if you were shocked equally with myself at the enormity of their schism and the frivolous pretexts alleged in its excuse, your zeal and utmost energies would be called into immediate exertion to effect its termination: if you were convinced equally with myself that the

doctrines retrenched by them were the doctrines of antiquity, you could no longer be induced to believe that the suppression of such articles has tended to approximate you to the primitive Church; you would rather unite with me in attributing their mistaken conduct to the ignorance of the age in which they lived. Pay only a little attention to the proofs presented in this discussion on that head: weigh them as candidly as they have been collected: peruse them as they have been written, with calm composure of mind and in the presence of God. I look for this favor from all you, who respect religion and tender your salvation. But as for those, who, blinded by prejudice, and ignorance, and hurried away by their passion, run eagerly in pursuit of the enjoyments of this life, and are reckless of the world to come, from them it is in vain to expect a hearing. For such I do not write, but pray.

Gentlemen, you are well aware that highly distinguished individuals belonging to your body, have, from the Reformation down to our times, unceasingly proclaimed to the world that *the points at issue between you and us are but slight abuses introduced into the Church*; ¹that it would be most easy to put an end to all disputes; ²that if on the one hand, there exists an indispensable necessity for all Christians to become again united; it is certain, on the other, that Protestants will never accomplish this union among themselves, unless by becoming previously re-united to the See of Rome; ³that there is no dogma, essential to salvation, but what is taught by the Church of Rome; nor any propounded by her which are incompatible with salvation; ⁴and that, according to the judgment of all well informed theologians, the distance between you and us is not so great as is generally imagined.⁵ Seeing that your own teachers have thus publicly professed these sentiments and numerous others of similar tendency, permit me to ask, what are you doing by thus prolonging a schism, which, according to the opinion of these impartial and enlightened individuals, ought never to have been begun; according to their convictions and wishes should have ceased as quickly as possible: and which in their opinion there would be but little difficulty in destroying? What, I ask, are you doing by thus prolonging the schism? You are rendering yourselves accomplices of the greatest evil that Christians can effect: of an evil which has not indeed originated with you, but which receives the support of

¹ Confession of Augsburg, art. XXI. ² Melancthon's Letter to Francis I. ³ Grotius, last Reply to Rivet.—Thorndyke, *On Forbearance*, p. 44. ⁴ Thorndyke, *Epist.* p. 146. ⁵ Declaration of the University of Helmstadt; 1707.

your ministry. By you, and as far as in you lies, it is held together and perpetuated; you hold the people attached to it by your example; and generations are enchained to it by your talents—nay, even by your virtues. You defeat (and perhaps, Gentlemen, you may have never seriously reflected on this awful point) you defeat, I say, the views of our Divine Legislator, whose desire was to establish unity in his Church: you rob him of the most striking and most generally palpable proof of his divine mission; the proof to which he himself has referred us in the unanimity of his followers.¹ By the substitution of divisions and discords in the place of union and unanimity, your ancestors, and you, who continue the work, have thrown confusion and dismay into the minds of the weak and superficial. They know longer know which way to turn, or what communion to prefer. Some of them you have led into indifference, and others into positive incredulity. Hence the crimes that deluge the world, to which you and we can equally bear testimony. These your first reformers clearly foresaw—they announced them at a distance, almost as soon as they had established those principles, from which they saw them inevitably derived upon future generations.

Destroy the schism—and you will eradicate the evil, you will arrest its progress and instantaneously diminish its frightful ravages. Destroy the schism—and you will accomplish the wish of the most religious and enlightened persons of the reformation; they who had hitherto regarded one another as strangers, would thenceforth act as friends, and, like brethren meeting after a long separation, would prevent each other with the kindly salutations of brotherly affection. Then would beam forth once more the joy and glory of the Church, indebted to you for the renewal of her pristine universality. The sixteenth century beheld your forefathers leave her bosom and curse it; the nineteenth would behold their descendants, flocking from all sides to their too long abandoned mother, who now can no longer remember the pangs and the miseries occasioned by their separation, for joy of their return to her embraces. How admirable a spectacle! to behold so many learned and zealous ecclesiastics, hitherto at variance with themselves and with us, now spontaneously retracting their steps to the fold of unity! What a striking lesson would such an event read to an age obstinately deaf to every other! What a triumph for the religion of our Saviour!

¹ St. John, xvii. 21, 23. See the second letter.

Then would the splendor of his divinity become irresistible; the indifferent and incredulous would come in crowds, and, prostrate at his feet, acknowledge and renounce their ignorance and blind stupidity. The upright and fervent Christian, who is seriously in the affair of his salvation and a fervent adorer of Jesus Christ, of whatever country, or religious communion must certainly feel his heart burn within him at the idea of so glorious a prospect, and pant with impatient anxiety to co-operate in its accomplishment.

Here is another visionary scheme, it will be said; another attempt at what is impracticable. Impracticable indeed! What! talk of impracticability, when we are under the most absolute necessity of effecting its realization! And why impracticable, when by the re-union there is every thing to be gained in the next world and nothing to be lost in this? Whence shall the insurmountable obstacles arise? Surely, Gentlemen, not from yourselves—You who are more alive to the obligation, and who can fully appreciate the advantages of unity, would, I am confident be disposed generously to make a sacrifice of transient advantages, if such sacrifice were called for. But, so far as I can anticipate, this re-union, far from costing you sacrifices, would bring you even temporal advantages. I will suppose that you were left for a time in your present offices; even so, you would exercise them on a more eminent theatre: the esteem and consideration, which you now enjoy, would acquire by the fact additional lustre and would appear in bolder relief. But numberless titles and dignities suppressed by the Reformation would again bloom forth: to these you would be called by the voice of the Church, who would naturally be inclined to give this preference to the children so happily recovered; and if honors and preferments should prove to be insufficient for her eagerness to invest you with them, our prelates would not be backward in imitating the example of their ancient predecessors, by quitting their episcopal chairs and pressing you to take their places.

I am equally unable to foresee insurmountable obstacles on the part of the government. I am aware that the privileges, claimed in former times for the sovereign pontiff over the temporal powers of kings, have, not unfrequently, given just cause of jealousy to the reigning powers. But these pretensions to temporal dominion have on no occasion been generally asserted or recognised by Catholics; they are abandoned even there, where they first appeared: they are vanished—and to fear them at this time of

the day, would really be to tremble at a phantom. 'Tis true, we acknowledge a primacy of honor and jurisdiction, which distinguishes the successor of Peter from the successor of the rest of the apostles, and constitutes his see, the centre of all other sees. But this hierarchical and spiritual order, absolutely distinct in its object from all earthly governments, and on that account applicable to them all, far from producing mischief to them, can only tend to serve their cause and increase their stability. Let it once be adopted, and immediately shall all religious sects—the too prolific sources of jealousies and quarrels among subjects, and of troubles, agitations and discord in empires—universally disappear; and to unity of spiritual government shall succeed the union of families, peace both in cities and country, and that invaluable concord of sentiment and affection which will always produce additional ease, compactness and energy in the civil administrations of an empire.

It must be from the people then that we are to expect this invincible opposition. I know with what tenacity they adhere to notions imbibed in their infancy. I know how deeply are imprinted on their minds the notions hostile to Catholics, which have been for so long a period inculcated into them. I will not dissemble how much it would cost you to remove such prejudices, to change their sentiments and gently lead their hearts to a reconciliation. Unfortunately there are but too many obstacles and difficulties discernible in this affair. But wherefore dwell upon obstacles, or indulge in a useless enumeration of difficulties? The important enquiry is, whether or not it be necessary to encounter and surmount them. If schism be compatible with salvation, well and good: matters may rest as they are; and we must save ourselves, each, as he can, in his respective religion. But, Gentlemen, you are well aware that this is by no means the case. The will of the Sovereign Master on this subject is well known to you; his orders you have distinctly heard; there is no room for mistake, no excuse for obstinate incredulity. He would have neither sect nor schism in his Church: these as you allow, fall under his malediction, and must therefore be removed. You know it to be his will and command that unity should exist among all his followers; let those, then, who would be his, go over to unity. He recognises but one extensive fold for the whole of his flock; in this fold let those congregate who would be reckoned in the number of his sheep.

This necessity once acknowledged, as it actually is by us all,

what remains to be done, but to make straight for our object, and pursue the road we have taken, without indulging in foolish apprehensions of difficulties or stopping at every obstacle that may seem to oppose our progress? I do not however believe them to be so formidable as would appear to be imagined. Instruct the people in a different style and as truth would dictate; represent the Catholics, not as they have been too often portrayed, but as they really are; explain our creed, not as it is ordinarily expounded, but as we explain it ourselves; and rest assured, the people will relish your instructions, speedily will they recover from their prejudices and become attached to the truths you develop; their ardor will be increased by the sense of sorrow they will experience at the discovery of their former misconceptions. If you desire certain proof of this, experience supplies it. How many Protestants of both sexes, of every rank and state of life, have we not seen, since the Reformation, undertake the examination of the Catholic faith, and conclude by embracing it? I could produce numerous recent examples, within my own knowledge, that have occurred in the different countries I have traversed. Never were conversions more frequent than at present: never was a greater disposition discoverable among Protestants to enter into Catholic unity. Perhaps the very excesses of the age may account for this: the disgust and horror excited by them in the minds of the upright and reflecting naturally induce them to seek consolation and repose in the bosom of the ancient Church.¹ Let us give our encouragement to these happy

¹ Since the first edition of this work, there has appeared the *Entretiens* of the learned Lutheran minister, Baron de Stark: more recently still the famous manuscript of the immortal Leibnitz has been brought to light. To these may be added the *Votum pro pace*, the work of the incomparable Grotius, as he is called by Leibnitz; the acknowledgments of the great English doctors, who are cited throughout this work; and the *Reflections* recently presented to the English public upon the necessity of a return to unity, by the Rev. Samuel Wix, Vicar of St. Bartholomew the Less, London.

Such authorities as these ought certainly to have great weight with the whole body of the Protestant Clergy: and, coming from the mouth of ministers, they would produce an amazing effect upon the minds of their congregations. I seriously put the question, whether there is an individual, no matter of what Protestant communion, if the truth and his salvation be dear to him, who can, without trembling, still harden himself against dogmas received as true, by the first geniuses of the Reformation. I would gladly be informed with what conscience they can at the present day refuse to surrender themselves to the appeal of the most learned men of their own party, and continue any longer obstinately to uphold divisions among the people, that are fatal to all happiness here and hereafter.

I conjure Protestants to read frequently the *Votum pro pace* of Grotius, and the *Systema Theologicum* of Leibnitz, Published in Latin and French at Paris, 1819.

dispositions. Let us endeavor to render general and to bring about an entire reconciliation. To us, as ministers of God, whether Catholics or not Catholics, to whatever country, communion or government we may belong, to us is the lofty enterprise especially delegated. A crew of impious and infuriated monsters [shall we yield to the wicked in zeal?] have conspired in our days against Christ and his alters: Let us re-unite to consolidate and extend their dominion. Let us consign to oblivion our ancient feuds, and with them the injuries and insults given and received: Let us cast all these miseries at the foot of the cross and join with one voice in recalling the Christian world to unity, ever bearing in mind the rigorous and indispensable precept of our divine Saviour on this subject, as also his prayer, hitherto so imperfectly understood by too many Christians:

‘That they also may be ONE; in order that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.’ St. John, xvii. 21. 23.

TREVERN,

Former Vicar General of Langres, now Bishop of Aire,
(lately translated to the See of Strasbourg)

AN AMICABLE DISCUSSION.

LETTER I.

A Short Account of the first Establishment of the Church of England.

SIR—I am very sensible of the confidence you are pleased to testify in my regard, by communicating to me the doubts that have arisen in your mind respecting your Church, together with your eager desire to discover the true Church, and by requesting my assistance in this important enquiry. I shall reply to you with whatever zeal is at my command: on that score, you shall have all that you can desire; though you will discover, no doubt, much to be desired in point of information and talent. My solicitude and my exertions are at the command of any one, who may do me the honor to call for them; my state of life renders this a duty, and the grateful recollection of numberless favors bestowed upon me in former times by many of your countrymen, converts it into a pleasure, in your particular regard. In this undertaking, I fear no trouble, beyond that which it may occasion yourself. Controversial discussions are ill suited to the taste of the times, and all their interest is lost in consequence of the indifferency that prevails under the plausible name of *liberality*. As you have been unaccustomed to such subjects, and may naturally be alarmed at entering upon them, I would willingly spare you a laborious discussion, and indeed am of opinion that a simple narrative of the manner in which your Church has been established, will of itself suffice to convince

you that you can no longer remain in it with safety. An historian¹ whose acknowledged celebrity is unfortunately surpassed by his unfaithfulness, has asserted that the history of the English Reformation was its apology. Had he asserted the opposite to this, he would, in my opinion, have been much nearer the truth. Of this you will be enabled to judge by the following brief narrative, in which I shall not contradict him in facts, but shall merely have recourse to authorities, which he himself would have admitted.

Eighteen years had elapsed since the marriage, which Henry VIII. had contracted, according to the dispensation granted in 1509, by Julius II. with the widow of Arthur, his elder brother, Catharine of Arragon, daughter of Ferdinand, King of Spain. By her he had many children, of whom the Princess Mary was alone surviving. In 1521, appeared at the court of Catharine the famous Anne Boleyn. She was in her twenty-first year, and was just returned from France, where she had spent seven years in the presence of two successive Queens, and the Dutchess of Alençon, sister of Francis the First. Youth, beauty and the graces set off her person, and inspired the Monarch with that fatal passion, which a few years later drove Catharine from the throne, put Anne in her place, for a time, then sent her to the scaffold, and involved England in a schism, that continues to this day.

As soon as it was known at Rome that Cranmer, the successor of Warham to the see of Canterbury, had taken upon himself to annul the marriage of Catharine in order to facilitate that of the King with Anne Boleyn, the consistory, on the 24th of March, 1533, gave a decision, by which they confirmed the validity of Henry's first marriage with Catharine, commanded the Prince to live with her, and, in case of refusal, pronounced against him a sentence of excommunication. On hearing this, the enraged Monarch determined on breaking with the see of Rome and withdrawing himself and his dominions from the jurisdiction of St. Peter, whose authority and rights he himself had so stoutly

¹ Burnet.

defended against Luther. Already were the people prepared to expect a change; sundry menaces had been sent to the sovereign Pontiff, and many blows had been struck at his jurisdiction. In fine, the Parliament meeting again in November, 1534, seizes hold of the jurisdiction of the Church and invests the crown with it, by an act, that decorates the King with the pompous title of the temporal and spiritual head of the Church of England. The King is eager to have his new jurisdiction acknowledged in the kingdom: he has a form of oath drawn up to which the bishops and clergy are obliged to subscribe; whoever refuses, or pretends to raise his voice in favor of the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, is punished with death. Cromwell, Henry's vicar-general, delegated by him to exercise his supremacy, runs over the different diocesses, suspends during his diocesan visits the jurisdiction of those bishops, who carry their cowardly compliance so far as to receive letters-patent, by which they acknowledge the Prince as the source and origin of all jurisdiction, themselves only exercising a precarious jurisdiction, subject to the good pleasure of the Sovereign.¹ The remainder of this reign was marked by the frequent exercise of spiritual jurisdiction, by the suppression of abbeys and monasteries, by various arbitrary dismemberments of diocesses, by erections of new sees, whose incumbents were consecrated and confirmed by letters-patent from the King. While, however, the supreme ruler was maintaining the schism with the utmost severity, he repelled heresy with equal rigor, and at the same time that he was punishing Catholics, who still dared to declare themselves for the chair of Peter, he condemned to the flames the disciples of Luther and Calvin, who were busy enough to dogmatize in his states. But it was not difficult to foresee, that the schism would one day open the door to heresy; and that, unity being once destroyed, innovations held in esteem upon the continent, would finally appear and gain ground in England.

Scarcely had Henry closed his eyes, when the Duke of Somer-

¹ We must except Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who courageously maintained his faith, and lost his head on the scaffold.

set took upon him the guardianship of his nephew, Edward VI. and the administration of the kingdom, at the head of the council of regency, under the name of Protector. He was a Zuinglian in heart, and had for his confidant, Archbishop Cranmer, who, no longer having reason to dissemble, soon threw off the mask, and openly entered into the views of the Regent. The Archbishop hoped to get his marriage into credit, which hitherto he had been obliged to keep concealed. The Protector looked for the spoils of the Church—many others wished to share them with him—nothing but the reformation could serve them all to their satisfaction: it was therefore determined upon. The Duke of Somerset commences by proclaiming his nephew supreme head in spirituals and temporals: he then obliges the Bishops to receive commissions revocable at the will of the King, names commissaries to perform the visitation of the diocesses, and in the meantime suspends the exercise of all episcopal authority: he announces by an edict that a collection of articles of faith is preparing in the council; that it will appear before long, and that they are to hold themselves in readiness to receive it with submission: and in the meantime he forbids any ecclesiastic to preach in any assembly whatsoever. Already had Peter Martyr and Ochin his companion been called to labor in the work of reformation. Both of these were Italian religious, who like the greater part of the reformers, had quitted the monastic state to embrace that of marriage. The announced work at length appeared. It took away from public worship its ancient forms, and from ceremonies their majesty. Confession, works of satisfaction, purgatory, prayers for the dead, the invocation of saints, the honor paid to images, relics, and the cross were abolished: the ritual, the liturgy, the mass with its sacrifice, the real presence with transubstantiation, all are swept away, and England is astonished to behold itself on a sudden become Calvinistic.

But by this time heaven appeared to be wearied with so many sacrileges. It removed from the world this youthful sovereign, whose weakness was so shamefully abused.¹ Mary, his eldest

¹ 1553.

sister, brought to the throne the Catholic sentiments, with which her mother, the virtuous Catharine, had constantly inspired her —aided by the ministers with whom she was surrounded, and above all by the wise counsels of Cardinal Pole, her kinsman, she succeeded in bringing back her people to the obedience of the Holy See. The parliament had itself solicited the reconciliation, which was pronounced by Cardinal Pole, nuncio of Julius III. The affairs of the Church were adjusted between the legate and parliament with as much prudence as moderation.¹ On their return to unity, they resumed the dogmas and liturgy, which had always been received in this great island from its conversion to Christianity to the young Edward. England, although troubled with the innovations and the outrages of the last reign, appeared generally to applaud itself for its return to Catholicity —and probably would have done so, much more, had not God, whose judgments are inscrutable, refused posterity to Mary, and deprived her, after a short reign, of her crown and her life.

She was replaced² by her natural sister, Elizabeth, who was indebted for the crown to the last will of Henry rather than to her birth, for she was born in the lifetime of Catharine, his Queen and lawful wife; and even the marriage of Anne her mother had been declared null, a little before her tragic end, by a solemn sentence of Archbishop Cranmer. It is said, that Elizabeth, convinced of the illegitimacy of her rank, ascended the throne with trembling step, and that being fearful of exciting dangerous commotions, she hesitated about the re-establishment of the Reformation, towards which, however, she had a secret inclination. Her ministers determined her to it, by representing to her that there would be no security for her in union with the Church of Rome, which in its public documents had condemned her birth. “She was well aware,” says Heylin,³ “that her condition of legitimate daughter and the primacy of the Pope could not subsist together.” The rupture was then deliberately resolved upon: all that remained, was to prepare the public mind for it. The ministers took upon themselves to

¹ 1554. ² 1558. ³ History of the Reformation.

dispose the people for the projected changes, and conducted themselves in the business with consummate address. The Parliament was convoked as early as the following December. In the House of Lords a law was proposed, which abolished that of Mary, gave to Elizabeth the title of supreme governess in all things spiritual and temporal, with all the rights exercised by Edward and Henry, authorized her to execute her ecclesiastical jurisdiction by commissaries, and, to maintain her supremacy, obliged the bishops and their clergy to take an oath, the formulary of which was subjoined to the law. The first reading of this bill caused consternation and dismay among the bishops, who then were sitting in the upper house. In vain did the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Chester; in the name of all the others, oppose their eloquence to the project of the law. It was carried, and but little attention was paid to their objections. It met with more opposition in the Commons. But ultimately the court party prevailed. Thus the ecclesiastical authority was taken away from the Holy See and the clergy of England, the entire spiritual jurisdiction attached to the crown, and schism erected into a law of the kingdom.

Elizabeth, after the prorogation of her parliament, enters upon her new functions and proceeds gradually to work. She summons all the Bishops into her presence, impatiently listens to all their representations, then dismisses them, saying, "that from henceforth she shall regard as the enemy of God and the Crown, whoever shall dare to support the pretensions of the Bishop of Rome." After this she sends forth into the diocesses her commissaries, who upon the refusal of the Bishops to take the appointed oath, declare them to be deprived of their office. They are all, with the exception of the Bishop of Landaff, driven from their sees. They are afterwards replaced by priests attached to government and to the new principles. Parker being nominated to the see of Canterbury, was consecrated and confirmed, according to letters-patent from the Queen, by some bishops of Edward VI. but who, being canonically deposed since the reign of Mary, had remained without jurisdiction. Parker, in his

turn, consecrated the first, who were nominated after him: in this manner, all the sees were filled in 1562, and then it was, that the new prelates agreed together upon a declaration of faith, which they drew up in thirty-nine articles and which received afterwards the sanction of the parliament and the Queen.

A new order of things now appears in England. Schism, for the second time, is about to be solemnly proclaimed. The nation is to be separated from the rest of Christianity, and is from henceforth to form a separate and independent Church, isolated from the whole world, like the territory in which it is enclosed. But by what right? By what authority? Such is the will of her, who aspires to become supreme governess in the Church.

By this time, the convocation of the clergy, having taken alarm at the projects of the court, had done its utmost to prevent them, had declared in five articles the apostolic belief upon the dogmas that were said to be the most threatened; the two universities had loudly joined their voices with the chamber of the inferior clergy upon the four first articles; the bishops had entirely adopted them, and of their own authority, as well as in compliance with the wishes of the priests, had transmitted them to Lord Bacon, the keeper of the seals:¹ but the declaration of the clergy stops none of these preconcerted measures; the declaration of the spiritual guides, of the bishop, the judges of doctrines, is put aside and despised; and by whom? by her, whom they pretend to give to the successors of the apostles as supreme governess.

From the cabinet these projects are carried into the parliament: on the first reading, the whole bench of bishops rise in opposition. In vain do they object before the peers; in vain do they instruct their flocks, out of the house, that the oath of supremacy wounds faith and the sacred principles of the government of the Church: they are not heard; they are stript of their jurisdiction, and driven from their churches: and by whom? by the supreme governess.

New subjects are named to fill their places. But how shall

¹ Fuller's History, on the Synod of 1559.

this nomination be confirmed, since the right to do it belongs exclusively to the Pope? By whom shall be changed and overthrown that order of things, which for centuries had been established for the communication of power in the Church? by the supreme governess.

She pretends to throw the discipline back to the times when the metropolitans were consecrated and confirmed by the bishops of the province: but this ancient discipline, being abolished by the Church, could be re-established only by it: but, according to the ancient discipline, the patriarch ordained and confirmed his metropolitans himself in person, or by the bishops of the province, his delegates; for so it had been regulated by the council of Nice, can. 4, and by other councils afterwards, as Dr. Field and Bishop Bramhall, to cite no others, confess: but on default of the patriarch of the west, neither the vice-president of Canterbury during the vacancy of the see, nor Bonner, bishop of London, nor Heath, metropolitan of the north, could be induced to lend their ministry to so manifest a violation of rule in the affair of Parker; but these four consecrators, in open revolt against the Church, were without episcopal authority. Hodskins having never been more than a suffragan, suppressed and never re-established, and the other suffragans created by Henry VIII., Scory, Barlow, Coverdale, having been canonically deposed under the preceding reign, for cases of marriage; the two latter in contravention to their monastic vows. But supposing them to be possessed of diocesan jurisdiction, still they could not of themselves extend it to a metropolitan and primatical see: but no matter, these irregularities, these defects, these nullities, are superseded in a moment: and by whom, pray? still by the same female and by her letters-patent: by her, who from henceforth, with the diadem on her head and the pastoral crook in her hand, speaks and commands obedience through her new spiritual lords, as their supreme governess.¹

But whence did she derive this absolute power to undertake

¹ *Femineo et a seculis inaudito fastu se papissam et caput Ecclesie fecit. Mar. Chemnitius in Epist. ad elect. Brandenburg.*

such unheard of attempts and to produce so total a revolution? From her House of Lords and Commons? Well then! let her parliament produce to the world the charter it has received from Jesus Christ: let it prove to us that Christ confided the government of his Church to the powers of the earth. But for our parts, we know, that he has confined it solely to the apostles and their successors. Thus, this parliament, although absolute and all-powerful in what relates to this world, was evidently without right and without power in the concerns of the Church; it therefore could transmit no spiritual jurisdiction to Elizabeth—Elizabeth could not therefore take it away from those who occupied their sees before she mounted her throne, she could not, therefore, transfer any from them to her intruded bishops, nor could they to their successors. Without right to destroy, repair, or rebuild, her attempts are null from the first. Her innovations all rest upon a false foundation, and the whole structure of the reformation sinks of itself, and is buried in the hollowness of its own system.¹

¹ “An act was passed, by a lay parliament, requiring of the prelates to take the oath, under pain of being expelled from their sees. At the expiration of the time appointed for taking the oath, the fathers who refused it, found themselves driven from their palaces and deprived of their revenues and of all the honors and privileges of their episcopal dignity. So far we make no complaint.....Let the secular power take back, if it please, the favors it has bestowed upon the Church: we are content. It will injure the temporalities of the bishops; but will leave uninjured the consciences of the subjects. For Jesus Christ has imposed no obligation on the subjects of defending against the magistrates the civil rights and immunities of the bishops, but most assuredly does he require of us to defend the rights that he has himself conferred upon his Church for its preservation, in spite of secular power, even during persecution; rights that no human power ever gave or can ever take away. Yet our adversaries have carried their violence so far as to wrest them from it. Our most reverend fathers are driven from their flocks and from the care of souls; altars are raised against altars; bishops of an opposite party take the places of our own bishops: their churches are occupied, and they are still living; their sees are succeeded to, before they are vacant, before the predecessors had left them or had been deprived of their spiritual jurisdiction by a sentence of bishops, to whom alone belongs the right of passing it, and even before they had been displaced by any authority whose decision would be ratified in Heaven, for fear, it would seem, lest God might acknowledge, as legitimate bishops, those, whom the violence of human power had driven from

There is no need of further discussion—the cause has been tried: the case is determined. The radical and essential defect of competency strikes with absolute nullity whatever was done by Elizabeth at that time. You may, if it so please you, call her work a parliamentary or Royal Church, ever bearing in mind, that it is a human and not a divine establishment.¹ He, therefore, who would belong to the Church of Christ, cannot remain in a Church of the above description. He must go back to the preceding reign, and enter into Catholic unity, in which from the establishment of Christianity in Great Britain to the twentieth year of Henry VIII., your ancestors, more fortunate than their descendants, had constantly the happiness of living and dying.

their sees. From these considerations, we concluded, that our ties of dependence, uniting us to our bishops, remained as close and binding as ever, that we still were bound, in conscience, to pay them the same deference and submission as before, and that we could not, without crime, transfer them to intruders, who had thus destroyed Catholic unity, and virtually renounced Christ himself and all his graces.”

Dodwell was very just in his ideas of the independence of the episcopal jurisdiction. In the principles, which he maintained in 1689, and which he would have had quite other reasons for defending, a century earlier, you read the condemnation of the proceedings of 1559, drawn out, unconsciously as it were, by one of the first divines of the University of Oxford.—*H. Dodwell, de Nupero Schismate Anglicano. Sec. 3, page 4, 5, London, 1704.*

¹ *Humanam conantur Ecclesiam facere.—S. Cypr. Epist. LII. ad Ant.*

LETTER II.

On Unity.

SIR—I yield to your solicitation, and since you require it, I will discuss, successively, the different articles upon which we differ; and in the first place, with your permission, I shall commence by casting together with you, a general glance upon the spectacle that religion presents in your country. Long did I witness it with sorrow; a thousand times did I groan in spirit, whilst residing amongst you; and now, in my state of separation from you, I am still equally afflicted with dismay and pity, so often as I consider, what you were, and what you are.

From the establishment of Christianity in your country, to the period, when, for the first time, mention was made of a reformation, your happy ancestors had known but one faith, one altar, and one religion. Bound from without to all the churches of the world, they were within themselves strictly united together: they resorted to the same temples, and assembled around the same altars. Under the direction of the same pastors, they heard the same doctrine and participated in the same sacraments. They all were brethren, all members of the same body of Jesus Christ. The name of a dissenter was not so much as known amongst them. The sweetness of harmony, and the peace of uniformity reigned in families, in cities, in districts, in the whole empire. At the voice of the reformation every thing changed its appearance. What do we behold from the time of Elizabeth? She had flattered herself, in the pride of her wisdom, and from the grand conceptions of her ministers, that by separating her subjects from the Catholic world, she should mould them into her reformation, and invariably bend them to her law, and that her spiritual supremacy would become as extensive as her temporal dominion. And behold! in spite of all her efforts, she could not draw to her belief the inhabitants of a single county, no, not of a single town or village. Her reformation has ever pro-

duced new succeeding sects, and affords no glimpse of hope that it will ever reach the term of its lamentable fecundity. From it have already sprung the presbyterians, the independents, the puritans, the socinians, the quakers, the anabaptists, the moravian brethren, the new-jerusalemites, the latitudinarians, the swarms of methodists, &c. Whilst the civil law admirably maintains its dominion over all your people without distinction, preserves peace and order throughout society, the evangelical law is abandoned to systems, to opinions, nay, even to the fanaticism of any individual who chooses to erect himself into an expounder and preacher of the gospel, and who possesses talent enough to gain a hearing and procure an audience. Everywhere, altar is raised against altar; everywhere, by the side of the established Church are to be found rival churches, dissenting chapels, temples strangers to one another, domestic meetings, where, at the same hours, worship is celebrated with different forms and ceremonies, the gospel explained in different ways, and doctrine expounded in different and contrary senses. In fine, since the thorough change produced by Elizabeth, religion, in your country, presents a confused medley of every sect and every form of worship; a perfect chaos of doctrines, in which each one plunges and tosses, dogmatizing and declaiming as fancy or feeling directs. Men no longer know whom to listen to, what to believe, or what to do.

All that we have to do, is to ask ourselves, whether our divine legislator came to give his Church different forms and appearances, to be subject to variation according to the caprice, or taste of men: to give to his doctrine and dogmas various and opposite significations: or rather, whether he has not assigned to his Church a fixed constitution, and to his words an appropriate meaning. Whether he has not imprinted on the system of his revelation, whether taken collectively or in detail, that character of simplicity and unity, which is so remarkable in all the works of God, and which constitutes their excellence and beauty, *omnis pulchritudinis forma unitas*. We are now arrived at a question so decisively important, that I feel myself bound to spend some time in developing the proofs, that, in my opinion, demonstrate

the necessity of acknowledging and preserving unity in government and faith. I shall in the first place, consult reason; for it will teach us that the dogma of unity is so conformable with, and so analagous to the spirit of revelation, as to appear inseparably connected with its establishment. I shall then open the scriptures, and they will shew us the precept delivered by Jesus Christ to his apostles, in the clearest, the most forcible, and the most peremptory terms: and, in conclusion, I shall interrogate the illustrious ages of the Church, ages so justly revered by protestants for purity of doctrine, and they will inform us that unity is the life and soul of Christianity, as schism is poison and death to it.

I. Reason of itself can sufficiently conceive that unity must attach to the plan and spirit of our revelation. In fact, what was the condition of the world with respect to it at the coming of our Saviour? You need not be informed. If you except the people who preserved the deposit of the sacred truths, all the others, being delivered up to the corruption of their hearts and the darkness of their understanding, had lost sight of their Creator. Incapable of comprehending how one single being could preside over all, they had filled the world with imaginary gods, produced the most fantastical forms of worship, at one time offering their incense and their prayers to the planets that roll over our heads, at another prostituting them to the productions that spring under our feet, to the vilest animals and the most shameful passions: and in this multitude of temples that covered the earth, the God who created them had not one single altar, unless the one, which Athens had erected *to the unknown God*.

Such was the deplorable condition of human nature, when there appeared in Judea an extraordinary personage, distinguished from other men by a character peculiar to himself, incomparable and divine: announcing to the Jews, that the time fixed for the abrogation of their ceremonial law was arrived, and to the nations, that they were all called to the knowledge of the true God. From the time that he came down from heaven to intro-

duce among mankind a system of doctrine, reason could no longer admit that he could be indifferent to the various ways, in which this his system would be understood, or that the most opposite interpretations could be equally agreeable to him. It could not admit that it should enter into the spirit and economy of his mission, to replace the multiplied idolatrous societies and superstitious worships, by a variety of separate sects, of incoherent and opposite communions; it could not admit that it was his will there should prevail in his Church, almost as general a confusion of ideas, as prevailed under the empire of blinded reason, and that there should be no better understanding amongst us in the bosom of the true religion, than there was in paganism. Where there exists an opposition of dogmas and a contrariety of opinions, there necessarily is error: and it would be absurd to suppose God indiscriminately favorable to falsehood and truth. Reason, on the contrary, tells us, that the God of all truth, in communicating himself to man, could reveal but one doctrine, and establish but one spiritual government, it being a fact that a difference in government produces more or less a difference in doctrine.

Reason tells us, he must have been desirous that his dogmas and precepts, whatever they were, should be adopted just as he had taught them; that nothing should be added to, or taken from them; that men should never presume to give them a signification different from that, which he himself had assigned them. It tells us in fine, that he came to display to the world the light of his revelation, to substitute a uniformity of belief in place of a variety of superstitions, to unite from north to south, from east to west, in one single association, under the yoke of the same doctrine and the same spiritual government, so many nations widely differing from each other in interests, customs, climates, prejudices and language: a design too grand for any mortal legislator whatsoever, but which well became him, who was entitled to the homage of the universe.¹

¹ "Hear, O ye innumerable nations, all ye men endowed with reason, whether Greeks or Barbarians! I call to me all the human race, of which I am the Crea-

One of your own divines¹ has spoken well on this subject: "Nor is the importance of unity," says he, "much less in these latter days of Christianity, for as much as all divisions in all times destroy that beauty and loveliness, which would otherwise attract all men's admiration and affection.....It is not the sublimity of Christian doctrine, nor the gloriousness of the hopes it propounds, that will so recommend it to the opinion and esteem of beholders, as when it shall be said: *Ecce ut Christiani amant*, when they shall observe the love, concord, and unanimity amongst the professors of it. And the want of this hardens the hearts of *Jews*, and *Turks*, and *Pagans* more against it, than all the reasons and proofs we can give for it, will soften them, and instead of opening their ears and hearts to entertain it, open their mouths in contempt and blasphemy against it." On the contrary, the proofs of christianity would easily enter into the heart by the most moving and irresistible of all proofs, the perfect union of Christians among themselves. Where, in fact, are we to look for the cause of this unanimity? How are we to account for this union of mind and heart among the innumerable faithful, strangers to one another in language, customs, climate, and government? No human institution could ever have effected so great a prodigy; *Jews*, *Turks*, idolaters, all would have felt its force; all would have acknowledged and adored a supernatural and divine operation. We may then reasonably conclude, that if men's passions had not revolted against the yoke of authority; if restless spirits had not been borne away with the mania of dogmatizing, and subtilizing upon mysteries; if ambitious hypo-

tor, by the will of the Father. Come to me, and be subjected and united to God alone and to his only Word." Thus does Clement of Alexandria represent Jesus Christ, as speaking in his admonition to the gentiles. And, in another place, the same father says again: "At his circumcision he received the name of *Jesus*, which signifies *salvation of the people*.....And truly he then became the salvation of the people; not of one but of many; yea of all nations, and of the whole earth." *Homil. in occ. Domini. inter diversas.*

¹ Dr. Goodman in his work entitled, "A Serious and Compassionate Inquiry into the Causes of the present Neglect and Contempt of the Protestant Religion and the Church of England." Pages 106, 107—Part 2nd, Chap. 2nd, 3d Edition, London, 1675.

erites and proud sectarians had not divided brethren, torn the Church and miserably dragged entire nations after them into schism and error, the plan of our divine legislator would have been gloriously accomplished, infidelity would have disappeared, all nations would have been brought over to the Christian religion: from every part of the globe the same prayers would be offered up to our only and adorable mediator, the world would be at the foot of the cross, and heaven-born unity would reign undisturbed throughout the world.

II. Reason has sufficiently proved that it is not merely expedient, but necessary, that the economy of Christian revelation be inseparable from the most absolute unity. We will, therefore, proceed a step further, and pass on to facts. Is it true that Jesus Christ was really desirous that unity should prevail in his Church and in his doctrine? Are we certain that he actually taught it as an essential dogma of his law? Let us open the archives that contain it, and first call to mind a principle on which protestants and Catholics are agreed: The principle is, that every one ought to believe and admit what is clearly expressed in the Holy Scripture. Now, therefore, let us see whether the dogma of the unity of the Church, both in its government and its faith, is found to be taught with that degree of clearness, which requires our assent, which commands and bears away our submission and our belief.

He, who would understand the plan that our divine legislator proposed to himself in coming down upon earth, should collect with care whatever the evangelists tell us concerning it in the different circumstances of his life. These different passages collected together and compared with each other, will prove to demonstration the correctness of the views, that unassisted reason has already taken of the subject. Our Saviour himself shall now open his thoughts, and reveal to us that the end of his preaching and of his death, were, 1st, to call to himself all the nations of the earth; 2dly, to unite them all together in one body, in the same doctrine and sentiments.

1st, St. Matthew relates that, being struck with the humility

of the centurion and with the faith that animated his petition, our Lord turned towards those who were following him, and said to them: "Amen, I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel: and I say to you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."¹ On Mt. Olivet, after having foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and before he announced that of the world, he said to his disciples: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations and then shall the consummation come."² We will, moreover, adduce the words uttered by him in the house of Simon during his repast with Lazarus, after he had raised him from the grave. Mary came with great piety to pour precious ointment on his feet: and Judas having censured this affectionate tribute of respect and tenderness as an act of prodigality, Jesus vouchsafes to justify it and adds: "Amen, I say to you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached *in the whole world*, that also which she hath done, shall be told for a memory of her."³ Who does not discover in these as well as in the foregoing words, the intention of the legislator that his law should be announced to the world and that all the nations of the earth should be called unto it?

So far, he had satisfied himself with insinuating it on certain occasions; it was reserved for a latter period to point it out more expressly. After his resurrection it was that he opened himself to his apostles upon the subject, when he declared to them the greatness and the extent of the ministry he laid upon them. "Going," said he to them, "teach *all nations*.... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."⁴ And at his last appearance, when on the point of returning to heaven, he again commands his apostles to execute his intentions: he addresses them with these words, the last that have ever been heard from his divine mouth: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria: and even

¹ Matt. viii. 11. ² xxiv. 14. ³ xxvi. 13. ⁴ xxviii. 19.

to the uttermost parts of the earth.”¹ Here then, are all nations, all people, both those who then inhabited this globe, and those who were to inhabit it to the end of time, marked out for the apostolic ministry, and from thenceforth invited and called to Jesus Christ. 2dly, But what then would he do? Listen, while he informs you: “Other sheep I have that are not of this fold.” This he said after having spoken of those, who already were following him, and evidently referring to those who had not, up to that time, heard his voice, that is to say, to all the nations of the world, to whom he ordered it should afterwards be carried: “Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold,” (the Gentiles, strangers at that time to the fold, into which the Jews alone had hitherto entered) “them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”² We here see the unity of the Church, distinctly represented under the figure of one only fold, which contains one only flock, confided to the care of one only shepherd or pastor. But who is this single pastor? Jesus Christ was the pastor on earth, and no doubt he continues to be eminently so in heaven, but, in order that, after his ascension, the entire flock might always preserve a pastor at its head, it was necessary that Jesus Christ should substitute a visible shepherd to the end of time, and in fact, we learn again from St. John, that at the moment of his ascending to his Father, in the presence of his disciples, Jesus Christ confided to Peter and his successors the administration and government of all who were his, and with a view to make this great prerogative better understood by all and incontestably recognized in the prince of the apostles, he was pleased to confer it upon him by a commission given thrice in succession: “Feed my lambs, feed my lambs, feed my sheep.”³ You see there is no exception: it is the whole flock, all the sheep who were one day to hear his voice and be united in one and the same fold; the whole of the faithful, therefore, are confided to the guardianship of one pastor, to the care of Peter, and after him to his successors.

Previously to this, Jesus Christ had announced the same pre-

¹ Acts, i. 8. ² John, x. 16. ³ John, xxi. 15.

eminence to the same apostle under another figure, and always by shewing that he had but one Church in view, as he was desirous that all his sheep should be collected into one fold: and this above all it behooves us to remark: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹ I beg you to observe these words: he speaks but of one only Church, therefore he did not wish to establish several; there cannot therefore have been several founded by him, but only one for the world, and upon one and the same stone, one only foundation. Ah! how should he ever endure division and parties in his Church, who has left us the axiom that, "every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."²

We see, moreover, his system of unity traced out most clearly by St. John.³ At the report of the resurrection of Lazarus, the chief priests and the pharisees take alarm and assemble in council. "What shall we do," say they, "for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation." But one of them, named Caiphas, the high-priest of that year, said to them: "You know nothing, neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not." Take notice of the reflection, which the beloved disciple of our Master subjoins. "And this he spoke not of himself; but being the high-priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; and not only for the nation, but to gather together in *one* the children of God that were dispersed." Such then was the plan of our Saviour and the object of his death: by paying his blood as the ransom for all men, he died to gather together into one flock, to unite in one body all the children of God, spread over the face of the globe, both those who then were living or who afterwards would live upon the great continents, and those who

¹ Matt. xvi. 18. ² Id. xii. 25. ³ John, xi. 4.

inhabited or would inhabit the islands scattered on the seas.¹ Your ancestors in fact were called in their turn to the body of Jesus Christ: they belonged to it for ages, and would have continued still to belong to it, if they had not been unfortunately cut off from it by the mortal blow of the reformation, which manifestly has destroyed, between you and us, that system of unity which our Saviour purposed to cement by his blood.

Have you ever reflected upon what our Saviour said when he told those that were his by what sign they should be recognized in all places for his disciples? He does not wish that men should know them, by the austerities of their fasts and abstinences, as was the case with the followers of the Baptist, or by the vain distinction of their dress or a minute application to external and bodily observances; still less by the infatuation of certain philosophic systems, like the adepts of the Portico or the Academy. What then was to be the distinctive mark of his disciples? "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."² And as we cannot recognize the true disciples of a God, without wishing to increase their number, all who would have seen them would have joined them in crowds; the irresistible charm of fraternal charity would have successively drawn whole people, and would gradually and quietly have subjected the whole world to Jesus Christ.

Now the principle of a universal and charitable affection most certainly exists in unity, as that of a reciprocal estrangement is found in schism and separation. As long as we belong to the same Church and the same faith, we form but one great family, we feel a sympathy and a love for one another as brethren. But, should, unfortunately, a separation take place; mutual complaints, accusations, and irritations ensue. Thenceforth we become strangers, and too often enemies to each other. Unity alone, therefore, can bind and attach nations together, and enters, of necessity, into the distinctive and characteristic mark, which

¹ St. John inculcates the same doctrine in these words (Epistle I. ii. 2.) "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." ² John, xiii. 35.

Jesus Christ assigns to his disciples, the cause being essentially inseparable from its effect.

But there still remains something more wonderful and striking. You are now to hear our divine Master praying that unity may dwell among us all, with words that should touch the heart of any one who glories in being one of his, and undoubtedly should be sufficient to call to his church all those that have had the misfortune to be born out of it. Let us read over again the beautiful prayer, which, a little before he delivered himself up to the power of his enemies, he addressed to his Father in these words: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name, whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we also are one."¹ So far he prays for his apostles; hear now his prayer for all Christians in after ages: "And not for them only do I pray, but for them also, who through their word shall believe in me; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory, which thou hast given to me, I have given to them: that they may be one as we also are one. I in them and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in one: and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."

Our Saviour here entreats his Father that his apostles, and then that those who were one day to believe in their word, as well as in the word of those who should succeed them in the ministry, that consequently all the faithful who should exist from the preaching of the gospel to the consummation of the world, should continue strictly united to one another; and that the voluntary union of their souls should become an image of the natural and essential unity that exists between Him and his Father. He repeats his earnest petition, that we may be among ourselves and in him as inseparably united as he himself is with his Father, and that if we cannot equal the divine unity of the Father and the Son, we may at least produce some resemblance

¹ John, xvii. This prayer fills the whole chapter, I only cite those words that are to the point.

of it here upon earth by the unanimity of our sentiments and the union of our hearts. Such, therefore, was the will of our heavenly Master, such the object of his prayer and of his death, that we may remain inseparably attached to one another, by all the bonds of peace, concord, and charity, in the same Church, the same faith, with one heart and mind. There was to be no such thing as a rupture, or a separate government in religion, no division, no schism: but it was to be all harmony, love and absolute and perfect unity. And why all this? Jesus Christ himself tells us, and the more to arrest our attention, inculcates the reason of it two separate times. "That the world," says he, "may know that thou hast sent me: that the world may know that thou hast sent me." And observe how this admirable prayer, after commencing with the apostles, then turning to those who should be converted at their word, is extended even to unbelievers, and thus embraces all mankind. It is then true, according to the word of our Master, that the perfect union of all his disciples was to present to the world a striking proof of the divinity of his mission, and that the beautiful and ravishing spectacle of fraternal charity was to attract unbelievers and accelerate by their union the propagation of the faith.¹ Can there be, for one who glories in the name of a Christian, a more pressing inducement to cherish and preserve unity, to return to it, to abet, and promote it? Is there any order more imperative than a desire and a request so feelingly expressed by Jesus Christ, a wish so ardently conveyed in our behalf to his Father? And since he assures us that he trusts to unity for the success

¹ The progress of religion is retarded, because all Christians do not propound the same doctrines. The Jews and Pagans and the unbelievers of our days say, that we are not to be believed, because we differ in opinion among ourselves."—*St. Clem. Alex.* ch. vii. Strom. No. 8.

"How can your religion be the true one, since you white men do not all profess the same? Agree among yourselves upon this point, and then we will attend to you." Extract of a speech addressed, in the name of five nations, by a chief of the savages, near Boston, to a missionary, of what sect it is not known, who had gone for the purpose of exhorting them to embrace the Christian religion.— See this speech in the Philadelphia Gazette, November, 1817.

and the glory of his mission; let us see whether, with all our zeal, we concur to its accomplishment? What then have all those been doing, who have since sown divisions among the brethren? what have Photius and Cerularius done at Constantinople; Luther, in Germany; Calvin, in France; and Elizabeth in your own country? They have taken away from Jesus Christ one of the proofs of the divinity of his mission, even that which he so ardently desired to establish for the world, when he was about to leave it. They have set themselves in opposition to his designs and his express wish, they have combated and annihilated it, as far as lay in their power. He prayed, "Let them be one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me;" and they said, by their actions at least, "let them not be one, that the world may not know that Jesus Christ was sent by his Father." God forbid, however, that I should attribute to their conduct an intention which could never be discovered except in hearts at declared enmity with Jesus Christ! Undoubtedly they never would have preached up or commanded the schism, if they had thoroughly comprehended its enormity.¹ Blinded by passions and human interests, carried away with the warmth of disputation, with the spirit of party, and that false glory which urges men to continue in the obstinate defence of a cause they have once espoused, they perceived not that their blows were all discharged upon Jesus Christ himself against his most favorite virtue, against the wish nearest his heart, against the most sacred of all his precepts, the precept best calculated for extending and propagating through the world the benefit of revelation and the fruit of his sufferings and death. This they neither felt nor considered. But we who at this day coolly and deliberately peruse the melancholy history of these great divisions; we who calmly contemplate the fatal consequences and the anti-christian and sacrilegious cause of them, we shall be inexcusable, and, it

¹ "When sects in religion are numerous they are the cause of atheism."—*Bacon*.

"The dissensions that prevail among the multiplied sects, that are come forth from the schools of Luther and Calvin, have been unfortunately but too favorable to the birth and progress of incredulity."—*Dr. Kett's Consid. on the Prophecies*.

may be, more culpable than our blinded ancestors, if we persevere in their schism, and obstinately persist with full deliberation in impugning by our separation, the order and arrangement of our Saviour, and concealing that splendid proof of the divinity of his mission which he was desirous should be discovered by the world, after his death, in the union of his followers.

Let us go back to the time when Jesus Christ invoked upon us the blessing of his Father; let us represent to ourselves the apostles, pressing round their Master, their hearts still burning with the first participation of his body, which they had just received at the institution of the Eucharist, yet in consternation at the announcement of the treachery which one or the other of them was soon to be guilty of, but afterwards consoled by expressions of kindness, and the familiar conversation, which he was pleased to prolong after Judas had abruptly left the assembly; let us represent to ourselves, I say, the apostles, with their eyes fixed upon their Master, when all at once, raising to heaven his hands, and his celestial countenance, which then was lit up more than ever, with the fire of prayer, and a ray of the divinity, he solemnly pronounced that sublime invocation, some passages of which I have quoted above. How must their attention and their hearts have been suspended in silence, in rapture, and ecstatic delight! How deep must have been the impression made upon their souls by these words proceeding from his divine mouth: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name, whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we also are one.....And not for them only do I pray, but for them also, who through their word shall believe in me; that they may *all* be *one*, as thou, Father in me and I in thee; that they also may be *one* in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Such words could never be effaced from their recollection; never could the apostles have lost sight of the pathetic and enrapturing scene where they had heard them. A thousand times must they have repeated them in the course of their ministry to the rising Churches; a thousand times must they have prepared the faithful against divisions and schisms, and have recommended them to hold inva-

riably the same language and the same faith, and to remain inseparably united in one body and one flock. It would be impossible to doubt of this, should they even have left us no written document on the subject. But it was the will of providence, that, upon this fundamental article of unity, we should be supplied with a guarantee of the common doctrine of all the apostles: we find it in the Epistle that St. Jude addressed to all the Christians then in the world. "My dearly beloved," says he, "be mindful of the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; who told you that in the last time there should come mockers, walking according to their own desires in ungodliness: these are they, who separate themselves, sensual men, having not the spirit."¹ We are then assured by the testimony of an apostle, that all the others, wherever they went, every where insisted upon the necessity of forming but one body, and have carefully cautioned the faithful against false doctors, who might desire to separate and form a distinct sect. This passage is very remarkable: it is the only one of the New Testament, which attributes to all the apostles any point of doctrine whatsoever as universally preached by them. As it contains the dogma that serves for the defence and the rampart of all others, the Holy Spirit no doubt intended to signify to us that all the apostles had taken particular pains to inculcate it, in order that we might feel the obligation of keeping ourselves more interested in its preservation.

Without fatiguing you any more with my argumentation, I will hastily and without much premeditation throw before you the various passages that the New Testament presents us on this subject. "And in fine, be you all of one mind.....being lovers of the brotherhood."² "Take heed to yourselves," said St. Paul to the reunited clergy of Miletus and Ephesus, "and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God which he hath purchased with his blood. I know that after my departure ravenous wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own

¹ St. Jude, i. 17, 18, 19. ² 1 Peter, iii. 8.

selves shall arise men speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.”¹ You see that the congregations of Christians spread in different places, compose but one church, which Jesus Christ purchased with his blood. You shall now see the same doctrine in the epistle to the Romans, in which St. Paul inculcates first the unity of the body, and then that of doctrine. “So we being many are one body in Christ.².... Being of one mind, one towards another.³.... Now the God of patience and of comfort grant to you to be of one mind one towards another, according to Jesus Christ; that with one mind and one mouth you may glorify God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁴ Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark them, who make dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrine, which you have learned and to avoid them.⁵ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no schisms amongst you; but that you be perfect in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it hath been signified unto me.....that there are contentions among you.....Is Christ divided?”⁶ Alas! how often would he have had in after times to repeat this question. And why has it not always been better understood? “God is not the God of dissension, but of peace, as also I teach in all the churches of the saints.”⁷ And as all the apostles taught with St. Paul, because their doctrine was every where the same, and because upon this article St. Jude expressly tells us so. We must not omit the 12th chapter of the same Epistle, which should be quoted almost entire. “In one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and in one spirit we have all been made to drink. For the body also is not one member but many: Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member.⁸.... For the rest, my brethren, rejoice, be perfect, take exhortation, be of one mind, have peace; and the God of peace and of love shall be with you.⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, ... enmities, contentions, ...

¹ Acts, xx. 28, 29, 30. ² Rom. xii. 5. ³ Ibid. 16. ⁴ Ibid. xv. 5. ⁵ Ibid. xvi. 17. ⁶ 1 Cor. i. 10. ⁷ Ibid. xiv. 33. ⁸ Ibid. xii. 13, 14, 27. ⁹ 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

quarrels, dissensions, sects. Of the which I foretell you as I have foretold you that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of heaven.”¹ I leave you to your reflections upon this awful oracle.

Hear how the apostle addresses you as formerly he addressed the Ephesians. “But now in Christ Jesus, you who sometime were afar off, are made nigh, by the blood of Christ....Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God, built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are built together into a habitation of God in the Spirit.”² Thus all the inhabitants of the earth, both those who had been blessed with hearing our Saviour, and those whom his gospel was one day to reach, should they even be at the extremities of the globe, like your ancestors in their celebrated island, all nations have been called to compose *one only Church*, to become by their concord and union, so many component parts of the grand and majestic edifice, which he came to erect for the world. For ages after, your ancestors were its ornament—why must they go out from it to shut themselves up in a temple of modern construction, built apart and separate, by a royal, it is true, but a human and perishable power, whereas the ancient temple having Jesus Christ for its foundation and its architect, is a divine and immortal structure! Without doubt, the most fatal misfortune, after that of withdrawing from it, is the not returning to it again.

“I therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called, with all humility and mildness.....careful to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism—one God and Father of all.”³ Here is unity evidently presented in every shape and point of view, in govern-

¹ Gal. iv. 19, 20. ² Gal. ii. 20. ³ Ephes. iv. 1.

ment as well as in faith, in the body of the Church as well as in the profession of doctrine. The governments of the earth may vary according to the will of nations and the vicissitudes of life; but the government of the Church founded by Jesus Christ, and purchased by his blood, must needs be one, as are its hopes, its baptism, its Lord, and its God. "Only let your conversation be worthy of the Gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or being absent may hear of you, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, laboring together for the faith of the gospel:"¹ And not fighting against one another, and tearing one another to pieces, as the sectaries have at all times exhorted their followers, and unfortunately have too well succeeded. "Fulfil ye my joy, that you be of one mind having the same charity, being of one accord, agreeing in sentiment. Let nothing be done through contention, neither by vain glory.....² Nevertheless whereunto we are come, that we be of the same mind, let us also continue in the same rule.³.....And let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts, wherein also you are called in one body.⁴.....But avoid foolish questions,..... and contentions, and strivings about the law. A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition avoid, knowing that he that is such a one is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment.⁵ Be not led away with various and strange doctrines."⁶ Thus did the indefatigable apostle of nations preach to the world. He still lives, breathes, and speaks in his epistles; his preaching, beginning with the Church, will pass on with it to the end of time. He never ceased, nor does he yet cease to recall to unity that crowd of societies gone astray for so many ages, to whom, nevertheless, is due the glory of having preserved Christianity in Africa, and carried it to the extremities of Asia, I mean the Nestorians and Eutychians; he still calls upon the numerous people of the Greek Church, so nearly resembling our own; and our brethren, the Lutherans, Calvinists, and English, separated in more modern times; he exhorts them, he conjures them all

¹ Philip, i. 27. ² Ibid. ii. 2. ³ Ib. iii. 16. ⁴ Coloss. iii. 15. ⁵ Titus, iii. 9.

⁶ Heb. xiii. 9.

in a body, and you, Sir, in particular, who have just seen and read his words. He again speaks to you and to all, in words to the following effect:—"Heretics or schismatics, slaves or free, to whatever climate or nation you belong, you have all been baptized to be one body and one Church. Return then to it, from which a secession was never lawful; enter her bosom which your ancestors unfortunately left from motives, which you can no longer avow, and upon pretexts, the fallacy of which are at the present day so well known to every enlightened and impartial mind. Fulfil our joy: let us live together with perfect understanding and reciprocal love, having but one heart and one mind, and then the peace of Jesus Christ, to which we have all been called, as members of one body, will reign in our hearts."

III. It cannot be doubted that the primitive Christians must have had much more lively ideas of unity than those that we recollect from the New Testament, since they had it as well as we in their hands, and moreover possessed the additional advantage of having heard this doctrine developed by the apostles in their discourses and daily conversations. The first bishops were formed in the school of their inspired masters, and received consecration at their hands. This immediate institution has gained them from posterity the honorable title of apostolic. There is good reason for supposing that they composed many works: unfortunately but few have come down to us.¹

The most ancient are the epistles of Saint Clement, who is called by the fathers, sometimes apostolic, sometimes apostle, sometimes almost apostle. He, as well as Titus and Timothy had accompanied St. Paul in his travels: he followed him to Rome, of which he was bishop, having succeeded Saint Peter, after Linus and Cletus. We will now consider the circumstances in which he wrote his first epistle: A warm dispute had just arisen in Corinth, something similar to what happened in the time of St. Paul. A party had been formed against certain priests of irreproachable character, and had been audacious enough to think of deposing them. Fortunatus immediately

¹ Tradition of the first ages.

leaves Corinth, arrives at Rome with information of the disturbance. Clement was then in the chair of Peter. He wrote to the Corinthians that admirable epistle, which for a long time was read in the oriental churches together with the canonical scriptures. He begins by lamenting over, "*that impious and detestable division,*" (these are his words) "*which has just appeared among them.*" He recalls them "to their former piety, to the time when, full of humility and submission, they were as incapable of inflicting an injury as of resenting it. Then (adds he), every kind of schism was an abomination in your eyes." He concludes by telling them that he is in haste to send Fortunatus back to them, "to whom (says he), we join four deputies: Send them back as speedily as possible in peace, that we may be quickly informed of the return of union and peace among you, for which we pray without ceasing: and that we may be enabled to rejoice at the re-establishment of good order amongst our brethren at Corinth." How sacred must unity have been considered in this happy age, when at the first appearance of division, the ancient fellow-laborer of Saint Paul, the venerable Fortunatus, to stop its progress, exposes himself to the dangers of a long voyage and betakes himself to Rome to solicit the successor of St. Peter to interpose his authority.¹ What would this apostolic Pontiff have said of the great defections of the East, of Germany, and England, since, on the first rumor of a dispute arising in a small portion of the flock in a single town, he immediately takes alarm, treats this disturbance as an impious and detestable division and nothing less than an abominable schism, and employs the authority of his see and his paternal sollicitations to bring back the Corinthians to peace and concord?

Ignatius, the disciple of St. Peter and St. John, being transported from Antioch, of which he was the third bishop, to Rome, where he was expecting the crown of martyrdom, under Trajan, in 107, in his passage by Smyrna, saw Polycarp, who kissed his chains: he visited, on his journey, many other churches, and wrote to them seven epistles, which are the most precious monu-

¹ Observe, I pray, this early recourse to the chair of Peter in the first ages.

ments of the faith and discipline of the primitive church. His epistle to the Christians of Smyrna commences as follows: "I give thanks to Jesus Christ our God, for that he hath filled you with so great wisdom: for I know that you are fully persuaded that being the Son of God he was truly born of a virgin, by the will and the power of the Father, that he was truly crucified for us in his own flesh, under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch; that with his blood he has produced us as the fruits of his divine and blessed passion; and that, by his resurrection, he has raised to the end of ages, the standard of the cross for the saints and faithful, both Jews and Gentiles, that we may be all united in the body of his Church."

He afterwards proceeds: "Avoid schisms and discords, which are the source of all evils. Follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ his Father, and the college of priests as the apostles. Let no one presume to undertake any thing in the Church, without the bishop." And yet a female in your country, was bold enough to drive all the bishops from their sees, in order the more easily to accomplish her new plan of a Church!—In his letter to Polycarp, "Watch most carefully," says he, "for the preservation of union and concord, which are the first of all blessings." Therefore the first of all miseries are schism and division. Further on in the same letter, addressing the faithful, he says; "Hear your bishops, that God may hear you. With what joy would I give my life for those who submit to the bishop, the priests and the deacons! Oh! that I may be one day united with them in the Lord!" And in his epistle to the Philadelphians: "Not that I have found schism among you, but I wish to fortify you against it as the children of God." He does not wait till schism has appeared: he stifles it in the birth and cuts it off in the bud. "All those, who are of Christ, hold with their bishops, but those who separate to embrace the communion of accursed men, shall be cut off and condemned together with them." And to the Ephesians: Whoever (says he) separates from the bishop and agrees not with the first-born of the Church, is a wolf in sheep's clothing. My dearly beloved, labor to re

main united to the bishop, the priests and the deacons. He who obeys them, obeys Christ, by whom they were established: he who revolts against them, revolts also against Jesus." What, I pray, would he have said of those who have since revolted against the decision of general councils, and who, in contempt of all the bishops of the world, have joined themselves to a few monks or refractory priests, or to an assemblage of laics?

I pass on now to Polycarp,¹ the celebrated bishop of Smyrna, who also is called apostolical, and no less illustrious than St. Ignatius. I recommend you to read the account of this bishop's martyrdom in the excellent relation of it given by the faithful of Smyrna to the Churches at Pontus. We have an epistle of his to the Philippians, in which he testified the utmost horror of those who were teaching heterodox opinions. Now heresy attacks at once both unity of doctrine, which it corrupts by its errors, and unity of government from which it withdraws itself, through an obstinate adherence to its own opinion. "Follow the example of our Saviour," says Polycarp, "continue firm in faith, unchangeable in doctrine, loving one another." At the age of ninety and upwards, they saw him leave them to go to Rome for the purpose of conferring with Pope Anicetus upon articles of pure discipline; the point above all in agitation being the celebration of Easter, which the Asiatics, as well as the Jews, solemnized on the fourteenth day of the equinoctial moon, and the Western Church on the Sunday following the fourteenth. His negotiation had the desired effect. It was agreed that the Eastern and Western Churches should follow their customs, without breaking the ties of communion and charity.² It was during his stay in Rome, that meeting Marcion in the street and wishing to avoid him, that heretic said, "Do you not know me, Polycarp?—Yes, without doubt," replied Polycarp, "I know you to be the first-born of the devil." He could not contain

¹He suffered martyrdom at Smyrna in the year 166, being upwards of a hundred years of age. *Rainart, Act. Martyr.* ²Another example of recourse being had to the chair of St. Peter.

his virtuous indignation against those, who employed themselves in perverting and sowing divisions among Christians.

Justin,¹ who renounced the Platonic philosophy, to embrace Christianity, which he defended by his Apologies and sealed with his blood, tells us that the Church is confined to one only communion, from which heretics are excluded, "There have been, says he, and still are individuals, who sheltering themselves under the name of Christians, have taught the world dogmas contrary to God, impieties and blasphemies. With them we have no communion, we regard them as the enemies of God, impious and wicked."²

Irenæus,³ the illustrious bishop of Lyons, a disciple of Polycarp, and, like his master, a martyr, wrote to Florinus, who had himself often seen Polycarp, and who was beginning to disseminate certain heresies: "You have not been so instructed by the bishops who preceded you. I could still shew you the place where the blessed Polycarp sat to preach the word of God. I remember his sanctified demeanor and the majesty of his deportment. Methinks I hear him still recounting how he had conversed with John and many others, who had seen Jesus Christ, and what words he had heard from their mouths; and I can assure you, before God, that if that holy bishop had heard of such errors as yours, he would immediately have stopped his ears, and exclaimed as he was accustomed; good God, to what times hast thou preserved me, that I hear such things! And immediately he would have retired."⁴ In his learned work upon heresies, speaking schismatics, he says: "God will judge those, who shall occasion schisms; cruel men who have no love for him, and who, preferring their own private advantage to the unity of of the Church, not hesitating, for the most frivolous reasons, to divide and tear in pieces the most glorious body of Jesus Christ, and who would willingly give him up to death, were it in their power.....But those who separate and divide the unity of the Church shall be visited by the chastisement of Jeroboam."⁵

¹ Martyred in 167. ² Dial: with Tryphon. ³ Born in Asia Minor, in 120—martyred at Lyons in 203. ⁴ Euseb. Hist. Book V. ⁵ Book IV.

Dionysius, of Alexandria, in his letter to Novatus,¹ who had just effected a schism in Rome, where he had got Novatian consecrated bishop, in opposition to the legitimate Pope, Cornelius, said to him "If it is true, as you assert, that you repent of having thus gone astray, shew us your repentance by a prompt and voluntary return. For every thing should be endured, rather than divide the Church of God. It would be as glorious to die a martyr to save the Church from a schism and separation, as it would be to die for not worshipping the gods, and in my opinion much more so; for in the latter case we become martyrs for our own soul alone, in the former for the whole Church. If then you can by friendly persuasion, or by firmness of conduct, bring back your brethren to unity, that good work will be of greater importance than your fault; the latter will no longer be laid to your charge, but the former will redound to your praise. But if they refuse to follow you and imitate your return, save, save at least you own soul. May prosperity always attend you, and the peace of the Lord again take possession of your heart."

To quote with justice the great bishop of Carthage,² many of his letters, and the entire book he composed upon unity, should be brought forward; I shall only give you some extracts. The following is a passage become proverbial in tradition: "He cannot have God for his Father, who does not acknowledge the Church for his mother. Do the schismatics then imagine that Jesus Christ will be with them in their assemblies, whereas they assemble out of the Church! Let them know, that should they even give their lives to confess the name of Christ, they never would efface, by their blood, the stain of schism, because the crime of discord is beyond all expiation: He who is not in the Church can never be a martyr."³ He afterwards shews the enormity of the crime by the terrible punishment of the first schismatics Core, Dathan, and Abiron, and two hundred and fifty of their accomplices: The earth opened under their feet, and swallowed them down alive as they stood, and sucked them into its burning entrails."

¹ In 252, Eus. Hist. Book VI. ² Cyp. mart. 258. ³ Book on Unity.

Hilary,¹ bishop of Poitiers, expressed himself thus upon unity: "Although there is but one Church in the world, yet every town has its Church, and all together form but one Church, although there are many in number: because being many in number, there is still but *one*."

Optatus of Milevum,² produces the same example to shew that the crime of schism is above that of parricide and idolatry. He observes that Cain was not punished with death, that the Ninivites obtained time to find favor by repentance; but no sooner did Core, Dathan and Abiron begin to divide the people, than: "God," said he, "sends a devouring famine upon the land, which immediately opens its tremendous jaws, greedily swallows them down and closes upon its prey. These miserable creatures more properly buried than dead, fall into the abyss of hell. What will you say to this, you who foment schism, and have the audacity to defend it?"

"Nothing," says St. Chrysostom,³ "so much provokes the anger of God, as to divide his Church. Whatever good works we might have done, we should not on that account escape punishment for having broken the communion of the Church, and divided the body of Jesus Christ."⁴

You are now going to read, probably not without trembling, in what manner St. Augustine⁵ spoke of schism. "The sacrilege of schism, the crime, the sacrilege full of cruelty: the sovereignly atrocious crime of schism; the sacrilege of schism which surpasses all crimes. Whoever separates an individual and draws him off to any party whatsoever, is thereby convicted of being the son of the devil and a murderer."—"The Donatists" says he moreover, "do indeed cure those whom they redeem by baptism from idolatry, but it is by inflicting upon them the more fatal wound of schism. Idolaters have been sometimes exterminated by the sword of the Lord; but, as for schismatics, the earth has swallowed them alive into its bosom."⁶—The schismatic

¹ Upon Psalm xiv. He died in 367. ² Died in 384. ³ Died in 407. ⁴ Hom. on the Ep. to the Ephesians. ⁵ Died in 430. *Passim*. ⁶ Book 1. against the Donatists.

may shed his blood, but he can never obtain a crown. Out of the Church, and after bursting the bands of charity and unity, you have nothing to expect but eternal punishment, even should you deliver up your body to the flames for the name of Christ.”¹

Now, Sir, in perusing the reflections that I have laid open before you on the plan of God’s revelation, and on the text of Scripture, perhaps you may have imagined that I have carried things to exaggeration. Have I said too much? You have just heard some of the fathers, who after the apostles, till the fifth age, have thrown most light upon the world. How did they cherish union! How alarmed were they at any thing that might tend to wound it! What zeal in applying an immediate remedy! What a horror of schism! They have assigned it its place at the head of all crimes, looking upon it as the most fatal of all prevarications. They understood better than we the spirit of Christianity, and discovered more clearly the noble views of our divine Legislator. Oh! if these views had been as seriously considered and as thoroughly felt by all Christians, if the necessary attention and obedience had always been paid to the precepts of Scripture and to the doctrine of the fathers, the sectarian would never have dreamed of making a party and of dividing the Church, or, if he had undertaken it, he would have found himself forsaken by the people. Wo to us, whom the vile interest of the earth have so often turned from the interests of heaven! Wo to us who are assailed by ignorance and blinded by passion! But when ignorance, and passion and interest have ceased to blind us, and when truth shews itself to us in full splendor, a thousand times wo to us, if we persist in the separation, after having acknowledged its revolting and anti-christian principle, and the frightful consequences that ensue from it.

It would have been easy for me to lengthen these quotations, by adding what has been written upon this subject, during the first five ages by Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Fermilian of Cesarea, Theophilus of Antioch, Lactantius, Eusebius, Ambrosé, &c., and after so many illustrious testimonies;

¹ Ep. to Donatus.

the decisions of the bishops united in a body in the particular councils of Elvira, in 305; of Arles, in 314; of Gaugres, towards 360; of Saragossa, 318; of Carthage, 398; of Turin, 399; of Toledo, 400; of Constantinople, 381; of Ephesus, 431; of Chalcedon, 451. I prefer calling your attention to authorities, which, for being more modern, will not on that account, perhaps, appear less strong in your eyes, and no doubt will astonish you the more.

The confession of Augsburgh (Art. 7): 'We teach that this one holy Church will exist always. For true unity of the Church, it suffices to agree in the doctrine of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, as St. Paul said, one faith, one baptism, one God, the Father of all.'

The Catechism of Geneva (Sunday XVI), teaches that, 'No one can obtain the pardon of his sins, unless he be first incorporated in the people of God, and persevere in the communion of the body of Christ:—Thus therefore there would be nothing but damnation and death for him who is out of the Church..... Yes, without doubt, all those who separate from the communion of the faithful, to form a separate sect, must never expect salvation as long as they remain in that state of separation.'

The Helvetic Confession (Art. 12), speaking of the assemblies held by the faithful in all times since the apostles, adds: 'All those who despise them and separate from them despise the true religion, and should be urged by the pastors and godly magistrates not to persist obstinately in their separation.'

The Gallican Confession (Art. 16): 'We believe that no one is permitted to withdraw from the assemblies of worship, but that all ought to maintain the unity of the Church;and that whoever strays from it, resists the order of God.'

The 18th Article of the English convocation, 1562, teaches the same doctrine almost in the same terms.

The Scotch confession (Art. 27); 'We firmly believe that the Church is one.....We utterly detest the blasphemies of those who pretend that all men, by following equity and justice, what-

ever religion they otherwise profess, shall be saved. For without Christ, there is neither life nor Salvation.'

The Belgic confession: 'We believe and confess one only Catholic Church..... Whoever forsakes this true Church, manifestly revolts against the ordinances of God.'

The Saxon confession (Art. 12); 'It is a great consolation for us to know that there are no inheritors of eternal life except in the assembly of the elect, according to that, whom he has predestinated, them has he called.'

The Bohemian confession (Art 8); 'We have been taught that all ought to keep the unity of the Church;..... that no one should introduce sects or excite sedition, but that every one should prove himself a true member of the Church in the bond of peace and in unanimity of sentiment.' How strange and deplorable was the blindness of these men, not to have known how to apply these principles to the time that preceded the preaching of Luther! What was so true, when they drew up their confessions of faith, was equally so, no doubt, at that time.

Even Calvin teaches; 'that to forsake the Church is to deny Jesus Christ: that we must be greatly upon our guard against so criminal a separation.....; that a more atrocious crime cannot be imagined, than that of violating, by a perfidious sacrilege, the covenant which the only Son of God has deigned to contract with us.'¹ Unhappy man! What a sentence has escaped his mouth. He will for ever be his own condemnation.

In 1680, Henchman, bishop of London, wishing to shew the dissenters the necessity of ending their schism, thought he should more effectually accomplish his object, if the Calvinistic ministers from without would join their voices with his: he wrote to M. Claude and to M. de l'Angle, ministers of Charenton, and to M. le Mayne, professor of divinity at Leydon: they all three entered into his views and gave him their opinion in writing. De l'Angle sets forth; 'that all those, who, from hatred to the episcopacy, forsake the established Church were guilty of a very great crime; for schism (said he), is the most terrible calamity

¹ Inst. book IV.

that can befall the Church.'¹ Claude exhorts the English dissenters to consider, 'whether their system is not in direct contradiction to the spirit of Christianity, which is a spirit of union, of social and fraternal intercourse, and never a spirit of division. . . . My Lord (continues he), I have not the least scruple in having recourse to violent remedies against the procedure of those who form a separate party, avoid the assemblies of the faithful, and withdraw themselves from your authority. Such conduct evidently amounts to a positive schism, a crime detestable in itself and abominable before God and man; those who incur its guilt, either by being its first promoters, or the supporters of it in others, must expect to render a terrible account at the great day of judgment.' And yet, neither Claude, nor de P'Angle, nor Henchman, had any notion of applying to themselves and their predecessors that well-founded threat, they so emphatically held out against the Calvinists of England!

I have under my eye many more passages in which Melancthon, Peter Martyr, Gerhard, du Plessis, &c., and before them John Huss, teach the same doctrine. I turn them aside, to bring before you some of the most distinguished divines of your own Church. James I. the second supreme governor in spirituals, and his theologian, Casaubon, in their reply to the Cardinal du Perron, acknowledge in plain terms, 'that there is no hope for salvation for those, who are separated from the Catholic Church or from its communion.' 'Touching the sin of dividing the Church,' says Dr. Goodman,² that it is of the deepest dye and greatest guilt, I suppose we shall easily agree; for indeed nobody can well doubt of that, who considers what care our Saviour took to prevent it, what pains he took with his apostles that they might be thoroughly instructed and not to differ in the delivery of his mind to the world, and with what extraordinary ardor he prayed for them upon this very account. John 17, 11.

¹ Collier's Eccl. Hist. vol. II. p. 899 and 900. Folio. edition. ² A Serious and Compassionate Enquiry into the Causes of the present Neglect and Contempt of the Protestant Religion and Church of England. Page 106-7, Part II. chap. 2nd. 3rd. Edition, London, 1675.

And the Apostles themselves answered their master's care with their own diligence and circumspection. He that observes how industrious they were to resist all beginnings of schism in every Church, to heal all breaches, and to take away all occasions of divisions, to unite all hearts and reconcile all minds; How they taught people to detest this distemper as the bane of Christianity, charging them to use the greatest caution against it, to mark and avoid all those men, that inclined that way, as persons of a contagious breath and infectious society: What odious names they give it, as *Carnality, the work of the flesh and of the devil*: He, I say, that observes all this, cannot but be apprehensive of the greatness of this sin. But he that shall trace the sense of the Church a little farther, will find the Primitive Christians having it in such detestation, that they thought it equal to the most notorious Idolatry, Murder and Sacrilege.' This writer had deeply studied the sacred volume, and had caught the spirit of primitive tradition. 'Oh that the Parliament of 1558 had made the same salutary observations, and that your fellow-countrymen had as deeply felt their force!

Samuel Parker, bishop of Oxford, expresses himself with a tone of confidence and triumph becoming this subject. 'I will challenge all the world to shew me any one thing more earnestly enjoyn'd and frequently recommended, than the preservation of Unity among Christians, and then if without an Unity of government, no other could be possibly preserv'd as our author (Thorndyke) has proved from common sense and common experience, that must be the thing principally commanded by all these injunctions..... And thus our Saviour having instituted the Society of his Church and established Governors in it, when he enjoyns them to be careful to preserve Unity, no man can be so dull as not to understand, that he thereby requires them to make use of all means of obtaining it, but especially such as are necessary to its preservation in all Societies. And therefore whether this Unity of Government be enjoyn'd in express words in Scripture, I will not concern myself to enquire,

because 'tis as clear there to all men of common sense, as if it were so enjoy'd, and that is enough." ¹

Such is the language of the enlightened men of your Church, of the most renowned protestant theologians, of the confessions of faith published at Geneva, in Switzerland, in France, in Scotland and in England; it is the language of the fathers whom I have cited above, and of the most ancient councils; in fine, it is the language of all apostolical tradition. What then is this great dogma so loudly proclaimed, both by those who have always supported it, and those also who have violated it? What strength must there be in its proofs, to make itself felt and known even in the bosom of schism and heresy, to have subdued its very enemies, and after the furious attacks so openly sustained from them, to have constrained them to pay homage to it, and by so doing, to place their principles and their conduct in so evident a contradiction as to be manifested to the eyes of the whole world! ² But in theory at least, and on the question of right, which is the point immediately in agitation, all parties are agreed; the differences of communion disappear; Lutherans, Calvinist, English, Scotch, the Greek and Latin Churches, the faith of all Christian ages, the doctrine of the apostles, the pressing and frequently repeated injunctions of our divine legislator; all these, and even our feeble reason itself, unite in attesting the necessity of preserving unity in the Church and in belief, and agree in placing the dogma of Unity at the head of the evangelical precepts, and schism at the head of all human prevarications. ³

¹ Religion and Loyalty, by Samuel Parker, D. D. Archdeacon of Canterbury. Pages 255-6. Printed London 1684. ² See Appendix.

³ If Catholics taught that salvation might be attained out of the true and only Church of Christ, their enemies would not have failed to place them in manifest opposition to scripture, the fathers, the councils, to the reformers themselves, to the confessions of faith of the reformed of France, Germany, Switzerland, the Low-Countries, Scotland, England, &c. They would not have failed, and assuredly with reason, to shew that of all Christians they are the only ones who have the boldness to place salvation out of the boundaries fixed by the divine Legislator. But when they agree with all the protestant societies upon this article, is it not very strange that protestants fall furiously upon them for it as a crime? and yet

After having endeavored to lay before your eyes, at one view, the different proofs that establish this incontestable dogma, I

the journals, pamphlets, sermons and treatises, which swarm in England, Switzerland, and France, are unceasingly exciting against them the hatred of their fellow-countrymen, as if Catholics alone restricted salvation to the true Church, and as if they did not hold this doctrine in common with the other Christian societies. What are we to think of such conduct? Let it not be attributed either to base perfidiousness or to hatred; let us rather impute it to ignorance, a shameful and fatal stain, it is true, and yet necessarily inherent in an age become too indifferent to the concerns of religion to instruct itself, and too fond of talking, not to discourse upon it, as if it was thoroughly versed in the subject.

Errors do not constitute heresy; but only that perversity which induces men to remain obstinately attached to them. Hence the expression of St. Augustine: "I may err, but I will never be a heretic."* Catholics do not hesitate to join this great light of the Church in making a complete distinction between those who established a heresy, and those who, afterwards being born in its bosom, have involuntarily imbibed error with their mother's milk. They regard the former as rebels to the divine authority of the Church; the latter as being without any bitterness against her and for the most part without obstinacy against her decrees of which they even know nothing. She believes that these latter, although they belong not to the body, yet belong to the soul of the Church. They think, with the same doctor, that the Church produces for itself children, both from her own womb, and from that of her servants, that is to say, from foreign communions. *Generat per uterum suum et per uterum ancillarum suarum*,† and that consequently heaven prepares elect from out of heretical societies, by the particular graces it is pleased to bestow. They cheerfully maintain moreover with the same Father, "that a person imbued with the opinion of Photinus, and believing it to be the Catholic faith ought not to be called a heretic, unless after being instructed he choose rather to resist the Catholic faith than to renounce the opinion he has embraced."‡ In fine, they admit with St. Augustine, "that we must not rank among heretics those who carefully seek after the truth, and who are in a disposition to embrace it as soon as discovered."|| According to these principles the learned bishop Challoner teaches that, "if error comes from invincible ignorance, it excuses from the sin of heresy, provided that with sincerity and without regard to worldly interest, a person be ready to embrace the truth immediately it shall present itself to him."§

Catholics cheerfully adhere to this conclusion of the judicious and profound Nicole: "it is therefore true according to all Catholic theologians, that there is a great number of living members and true children of the Church, in communions separated from her; since there are so many infants, who always form a considerable part of them and since there might also be some among the adults, although she does not pay attention to it, because she does not know them."¶

* Epist. CLXII. † On baptism against the Donatists B. I. ch. X. ‡ Ibid. || Epist. CLXII. § Grounds of the Christian Doctrine, page 9, 12th edition, London. ¶ On Unity. vol. I. ch. III.

intend with the assistance of God, to develope, in the following letter, the immediate causes to be derived from it.

They maintain with the skilful theologians of the University of Paris, "that children of the uninstructed partake neither of heresy nor of schism; that they are excused by their invincible ignorance of the state of things: that they may, with the grace of God, lead a pure and innocent life: that God does not impute to them the errors to which they are attached by an invincible ignorance; that they may thus belong to the soul of the Church with faith, hope, and charity.*

In fine, leaving to themselves certain morose and ill-informed minds, Catholics love to repeat, with regard to the greater number of persons who live in schism and heresy, what Salvian formerly said of the Goths and Vandals brought over to Christianity by the Arians: "They are heretics, but without knowing it:" they err, "but with perfect sincerity." *Qualiter pro hoc falsæ opinionis errore, in die judicii puniendi sunt, nullus potest scire, nisi solus judex.*† Religion teaches Catholics to judge the doctrines and forbids them to judge the persons of men. Of course therefore they maintain the principles and never allow themselves to condemn those who are out of their Church; they leave them to the judgment of God. He alone knows the bottom of the heart and the graces that he gives: he alone can read the actual disposition of the souls that he calls to his tribunal.

This doctrine is conformable with the spirit of Christianity, and shews to great advantage the extent of Catholicity whilst it forbids us to mark out its precise boundaries. It also fully exculpates Catholics from that imputation of enmity, and spirit of intolerance, which people are fond of lodging against them.

* Censure de l'Emile. † De Gub. Dei. Lib. V.

APPENDIX I.

“But (have the innovators said), corruption had found its way to the very heart of the Catholic Church; we were positively obliged to leave her for our own security.” They have said this, I am aware. We shall presently see what we are to think of the weighty accusation; let us examine in the first place, whether it be sufficient to justify their separation.

1. I maintain that their accusation, were it true, would not excuse them from schism, for I would answer them with one of your learned teachers.* “The corruptions in a Church are not of so destructive an influence, as schisms and divisions from it. It being much in the body spiritual as in the natural: where that which severs and dissolves the continuity of parts, tends more to the destruction of the whole, than that which corrupts them. You may cure a throat when it is *sore*, but not when it is *cut*.”

I would answer them with St. Cyprian and St. Augustine, that there never can be a lawful necessity for destroying unity; that Aaron bore with a multitude of Jews, who had erected for themselves an idol; Moses with a million of people who were ever murmuring against God; David, with Saul; Isaiah, with those whom he accused of an infinity of crimes; and Jesus Christ with Judas. I would reply with the same fathers that Jesus Christ has enjoined the preservation of union among ourselves, reserving separation to himself alone, because the right of separating belongs to him alone, who can never be mistaken; that, until the harvest, that is, till the last judgment the chaff and the wheat, the straw and the grain must remain mixed together: that therefore we are not to leave the Church, because we discover chaff in the morals of individuals, though never in the public faith; that we for our parts have only to endeavor to become the good grain. I would reply that the Donatists in vain pleaded for their justification, that Catholics were become Pagans, they have not on that account been the less justly accused of schism by the whole Church, even by the acknowledgment of protestants.

2. As for the heads of accusation; there is no need of other witnesses than the protestants themselves, to acquit the Catholic Church of them. In fact, if in the beginning to attract the poor people or to retain them in their party; if afterwards to justify their separation by some specious pretext, it was found necessary to make a noise with the sounding words, corruption, errors, dangerous to salvation, and idolatry in worship, divine providence permitted that there should arrive moments of disinterestedness and calmness, during which the reformers themselves, and their adherents after them, have relieved the Catholic Church of these horrible accusations. For this I appeal to the confession of Augsburg, the most authentic and most solemn act of the Lutheran communion; it thus concludes

* South's Sermons, vol. V, page 948. London, 1737.

the exposition of its doctrines; "Such is the abridgment of our faith, in which nothing will be discovered contrary to scripture, or to the Catholic Church, or even to the Roman Church, as far as we can know it from its writers. The dispute turns upon some few abuses which have been introduced into the Churches without any certain authority; and should there be found some difference, that should be borne with, since it is not necessary that the rites of the Church should be every where the same."* In the apology is found the same moderation. Luther (would you believe it?) in the treatise which he published† against private masses, and in which he relates his famous dialogue with the devil, outrageous as he shews himself against the Catholic Church, which he regards as the seat of Antichrist and abomination, far from refusing it the title of Church on that account, declares in spite of every thing, "that it is the true Church, the pillar and support of truth and the most holy place. In this Church," continues he, "God miraculously preserves baptism, the text of the Gospel in all languages, the remission of sins and absolution, as well in private confession as in public; the sacrament of the altar about Easter and three or four times a year, although they have cut off one kind from the people; the vocation and ordination of pastors, consolation in the last agony, the image of the crucifix, and at the same time the remembrance of the death and passion of Jesus Christ; the psalter, the Lord's prayer, the Creed, the Decalogue, and many pious canticles in Latin and German." And a little later: "Where are found the true relics of the saints, there no doubt has been, and still is, the holy Church of Jesus Christ; there have dwelt the saints, for the institutions and the sacraments of Jesus Christ are there, except one of the kinds, which has been forcibly removed. On this account it is certain that Jesus Christ has been present in it, and that his spirit preserves therein the true knowledge of himself, the true faith in his elect."

Two protestant ministers of France, in their work *Montauban justifie*, published in 1662, quote a similar passage from Luther's book against the Anabaptists. They inform us afterwards that the answer given by Melancthon to his mother was known by all Germany and even through the whole of Europe. She asked him, which of the two religions was the better, the Catholic or the Protestant. "In my opinion," replied he, "the Lutheran is the most plausible; the Catholic, the most secure."

I appeal moreover, both to the declarations of faith sent by the Calvinists of France to the protestants of Germany, in which they adhere to the Confession of Augsburg, except the 10th article upon the Eucharist; and to that of Theodore Beza, speaker for the Calvinistic party at the celebrated conference of Poissy.‡ The cardinal de Lorraine having proposed to him to receive the Confession of Augsburg in all its articles, Beza accepted them without hesitation, with the exception of that of the Lord's Supper, and solemnly assured him of the consent of all his brethren. Here then is the Catholic and Roman faith recognized, by authentic acts, to be conformable in essential points with the faith of the Lutherans and Calvinists (the Eucharist excepted), and consequently exculpated, by their own confession, from idolatry, fundamental errors, and all corruptions incompatible with salvation. And as for the Eucharist, they cannot accuse of idolatry the adoration we there pay to Jesus Christ, since they tolerate it in the Lutherans,

* Art. 21, An. 1530. † 1534. ‡ 1557.

many of whom pay the same adoration to Jesus Christ in their sacrament, while the rest, agree at least, after Luther, that there is no crime in adoring Jesus Christ present upon the altar. It is moreover remarkable that the most learned Calvinists have argued with these latter, that they could not without impiety refuse their adoration to Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, where they believe him to be present, and that in this respect Catholics reasoned more consistently than they did themselves.

Calvin in person assures us* that Jesus Christ in order that his Church might not entirely perish, had preserved baptism and the essentials of religion in France, Italy, Germany, Spain, England, &c., and in his commentaries upon St. Paul, he ranks among the saints, Cyprian, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, Bernard, and many others who resembled them, professing, no doubt, the doctrine that these saints professed, the Catholics of their time did, and as they have done ever since. Peter Martyr expresses himself much in the same manner.

Daille, the celebrated minister of Charenton, † after proving that the Church of Rome admitted the articles of the Creed, adds: "And if there be still any other principal article, this Church receives them all and embraces them with you, and condemns the names and the memory of those, who have either shaken or overturned them in ancient or modern times. Truly we cannot deny, nor would we wish to deny, that the Church of Rome believes these holy truths. Thanks be to our Lord for having preserved them for so many ages amidst so many revolutions. We could indeed have desired that she had never added any thing of her own.....If she had remained within these bounds, neither our fathers, nor we should ever had any reasons for leaving her communion." And in another part, after enumerating the fundamental articles of Protestants, he continues: "Rome does not call in question the articles, which we believe; it even professes to believe them. Who can deny, even in our day, that Rome admits the necessary articles." ‡ Truth however obliges me to tell you, that Daille seemed to be ashamed, when in the presence of his brethren in Germany, of having conceded so much to the Church of Rome. But, whatever he asserted afterwards respecting the pernicious opinions added by her to the necessary articles, it still is equally certain that the acknowledgments just cited were made by him.

I have still another important witness to produce, || the too famous Bishop of Spalatro, who, while a refugee in England under James I., published there, in 1616, his Latin work upon the Ecclesiastical republic, in which he expresses himself as follows: "It is one thing to desert the faith, by a deficiency; and another to injure the faith, by excess. Heresy properly speaking consists in the deficiency, that is to say, when an essential article is denied or not admitted. I was born it is true, in the Church of Rome; to it I am indebted for my education and my dignities; I grew gray in its bosom. Although I have for a long time been imbued with its errors, I will not, for I cannot, acknowledge that I ever was a heretic in the sense above explained, not even materially so. For most assuredly there is no fundamental articles of faith, that this Church rejects or that I have ever rejected with it." And afterwards on this point: "What then are we to think of the Church of Rome? Is it Catholic or not? I answer, still keeping in

* Instit. chr. B. IV. ch. II. † Quoted by Messrs. de Wallemburgh—*Apol.* ch. V. ‡ *La loi fondee* part III. || M. Ant. de Dominis, Archbishop of Spalatro, in Dalmatia.

view a deficiency in fundamentals, that this Church has always been and is still at the present day, perfectly Catholic, inasmuch as she professes and believes the Catholic and fundamental faith, in all its integrity; although I doubt not that its faith is rather sickly than sound, and that it has lost some of its beauty by an admixture of strange additions."

There is no one, not even the impetuous Jurieu, but who has been obliged to acknowledge that salvation is attainable in the Church of Rome. He afterwards indeed denies having said it, and doubtlessly would wish not to have done so.... He redoubles his invectives and calumnies against it, and goes so far as to pretend that in it is idolatry as gross as formerly existed at Athens. "But, with all this (said M. Bossuet,) God is the Master, God compels the enemies of the truth and the calumniators of the Church to say more than they would wish, and while in the very act of calumniating the Church, they unavoidably find themselves at the feet of that Church, acknowledging that men are saved in her communion." The passages from Jurieu follow after: you may find them in the third "Advertisement" of this great Bishop to the Protestants.

I pass on to some particular facts, which will also give you to understand that the opinion of the reformed teachers is favorable to the Church of Rome. Henry IV. after having conquered his kingdom sword in hand, applied himself seriously to the study of religion. Although the interests of his crown might give him an inclination towards Catholicism, he weighed the reasons on both sides; and it was principally from the acknowledgment of the divines of his party, that he determined upon embracing the Catholic religion; for when the most able ministers acknowledged to him that he could also work out his salvation in this Church, he exclaimed: "Then I will take the safest side."* M. de Sully had not only declared to him that he held it as certain that men might be saved being Catholics, but moreover mentioned to this Prince five of the principal ministers, who were not opposed to this sentiment.

Formerly, when in England, I read the declaration made by the Duchess of York before her death, under Charles II., of the reasons that had induced her to embrace the Catholic religion. I have now nothing but the translation before me;† I have reason to believe it faithful. "I was desirous, (says she,) of conferring upon these matters with the two most talented bishops that we have in England, and both of them candidly acknowledged to me, that there are many things in the Church of Rome, which it were desirable that the Church of England had always preserved, such as confession, which they cannot deny that God himself commanded, and praying for the dead, which is one of the most authentic and most ancient practices of the Christian religion; that, as for themselves, they still made use of them in private, without making profession of them in public.

"As I was pressing one of these bishops upon the other points of controversy, and principally upon the real presence of Jesus Christ in the adorable sacrament upon the altar, he frankly replied to me, that, if he were a Catholic, he would not change his religion; but that having been brought up in the Church in which he believed himself to enjoy all that was necessary for salvation, and having been

* Mem. de Sully, ch. xxxviii. † See the end of vol. ii. of the Hist. of Calvin, by Maimbourg.

baptized in it, he thought he could not leave it without great scandal." Oh! but unity and schism! did they never enter your mind, my Lord?

Elizabeth Christina, Queen of Charles VI., and mother of the immortal Maria Theresa, was desirous before she accepted the imperial crown, of securing the most important of all affairs, her salvation. She consulted upon the subject the most able protestant divines, and they declared to her, by an authentic and public document, that the Catholic religion also conducted to salvation.

On occasion of the projected marriage (afterwards ratified), of the Princess of Wolfenbuttel with Charles III., King of Spain, the faculty of theology at Helmstadt were consulted upon the following question. Can a Protestant Princess, destined to marry a Catholic Prince, embrace the Catholic religion, with safe conscience? The professors unanimously gave an affirmative opinion in a long and argumentative reply, which they all signed, the 28th of April, 1707. You may read it at the end of a small work entitled: "The Duke of Brunswick's fifty reasons for leaving the Lutheran communion to enter into the Catholic Church."*

To these decisions, I could join the testimonies of your own instructors, such as Barrow, Hooker, Cowel, Bunny, Some, Morton, Montague, Heylin, Potter, Laud, Stillingfleet, &c. Of these I shall only cite one, who is of great weight. "I declare, and am bound candidly to declare (says Thorndyke) I know not of any article necessary to salvation, that is prohibited by the Church of Rome; nor of any incompatible with salvation, that is propounded by her."†

What shall we say of so many individuals who, being born and brought up in protestant communions, accustomed to hear of nothing but the errors, superstitions, and idolatry of the Church of Rome, induced afterwards by circumstances to examine more closely its doctrine, its principles, and its worship; have acknowledged their purity and conformity with the primitive faith and practice, have thrown aside their hatred of it together with the prejudices that had only been recommended to their belief by misrepresentations and calumnious imputations, and have concluded by ranking themselves among the number of her children, and by defending and vindicating her from the errors and crimes, which they themselves had so long been accustomed to lay to her charge. Such, among others, in my country, were the celebrated Cardinal Duperron, the grave and sensible Desmahis, the eloquent Pelisson, the learned Morin, priest of the Oratoire, and Papin, long a zealous minister of Calvinism, and who, after preaching his errors in France, England, and Germany, came to renounce and abjure them in the hands of the great bishop of Meaux; and in your country, Challoner, Gother, the two Hays, and the anonymous author of an excellent work which does no less honor to his heart than to his head.‡ All these distinguished men,

* Sold by Keating, Duke street, Grosvenor square, London, 1814. † Thorndyke in Epilog. p. 146. ‡ *An Essay towards a Proposal for Catholic Communion.* This is an excellent work, that cannot be sufficiently recommended to the English, who wish to become acquainted with the true Church. It was reprinted in London some few years back at the expense of the late M. Sheldon Constable, of Burton.

And to cite more recent examples, I will here call to your recollection two striking conversions, that of M. Nathaniel Thayer, who after being a minister of the sect of puritans at Boston, was converted at Rome, in 1783, and has himself published the

to whom many more might have been added, have left behind them admirable works, equally useful to those who seek the truth, and to those who are carried on by their zeal to defend it.

I can personally assure you, sir, that, having often had occasion, during my long residence in your country, to converse upon the difference of our religions with English bishops and divines, and even with well instructed laics; I have always found them of the same opinion and almost employing the same words. They would say to me that "their religion and mine were equally good; that the greatest part of the differences turned upon ceremonies and points of discipline, and some also upon opinions superadded (would they say), to the ancient belief by our Church, and which theirs had thought proper to retrench; they considered the Churches of France and England as two sisters, in whom were discoverable a family likeness and the leading features of resemblance."

Would to God, sir, that this resemblance might become perfect, as it formerly was, and as it ought never to have ceased to be!

After the facts and testimonies you have just read, I dare flatter myself, sir, that you, by this time, no longer doubt of the injustice of the imputations cast upon the Church of Rome. They have originated in that sourness, malignity, and hatred, which the spirit of party always produces, and from people unfortunately finding it their interest to extend and support the defection. Destitute of reality and proofs, they recoil upon their inventors, and never will they justify the rupture. "It was evil done of them who first urged such a separation."* Calvin therefore was wrong in his conceit, when he wrote to Melancthon in 1552: "We have been compelled to separate from the whole world."†

motives that led him back to Catholic unity; that of Miss Elizabeth Pitt, a relation of the immortal minister, whose talents and eloquence have so long been the admiration and the astonishment of England; she pronounced her vows at the convent of the visitation at Abbeville, the 26th of November, 1787. I present you with the conclusion of the letter which, she wrote upon her conversion to the cure de Saint Jacques, of the same town, the 20th of June, 1788: "As for the protestants, who may obtain information of it, I do not consider myself calculated to instruct them, much less to convert them: but I conjure them, as my brethren, whose salvation is most dear to me, to follow one piece of advice; which is, not to reject, without the most serious examination, the doubts, which must be originated in their minds, if they think deliberately upon it, by the novelty of their belief and its variations since the reformation, compared with the antiquity and unity of the Catholic doctrine; for the true faith is one; and must necessarily be traced to the apostles and to Jesus Christ. May it please God to enlighten them, as he has deigned to enlighten me, in order to draw me from the errors in which my birth and education had unfortunately engaged me." Germany presents, in our days, a multitude of enlightened protestants, who have embraced Catholicism, such as the learned M. Schlegel and his wife, daughter of the celebrated Mendelsohn: M. le comte de Stolberg, not less illustrious for his profound learning than for his noble birth: M. Werner, who from a poet becomes an humble priest, attracts all Vienna to his eloquent discourses, as he had before drawn Berlin to his dramatic representations: the learned Lutheran minister Baron de Stark, a Catholic in private life and still more in his last works; the celebrated Jurist M. de Haller, &c., &c.

* Bunny's *Treatise tending to pacification*, p. 109. † "Discessionem facere a mundo oto coacti sumus."

To prove, however, that all these accusations were inadmissible, it would have been quite sufficient, without the detail, to have made the single observation, with which this note, already too long, shall be concluded. Who are they, that have dared to accuse the Church of innovation in dogma, error in doctrine, superstition in practice, and idolatry in worship? Who are they? The question is important.

At the head of all appears Luther, an Augustinian friar; next Carlostadius, an archdeacon; Melancton, a professor of the Greek language; all three at Wirtemberg; their party is quickly joined by Œcolampadius, a monk of the order St. Laurence, near Augsburg; by Munster, a grey friar; by Bucer, a dominican; and by the famous Muncer, who from a disciple, became the infuriated leader of the anabaptists. So much for the first Lutherans. In Switzerland, Zuinglius, the cure of Glaris; at Geneva, in Switzerland, and in France, Calvin, the young cure of Pont l'Éveque, near Noyon; Theodore Beza, the Latin poet and prior at Lonjumeau; Peter Martyr, a Florentinian, who left the regular chapter of St. Augustine, ran from Italy with Ochin, general of the Capuchins, to dogmatize in Switzerland, then at Strasburgh, then in England, and last of all once more in Switzerland, where he died. So much for the Calvinists.*

In Scotland, Knox, a monk, a priest, and afterwards the furious disciple of Calvin, whose principles he conveys to his native country, where he puts every thing into a flame; † the Earl Murray, the natural, but unnaturally cruel brother of Mary Stuart, who passed from the convent of St. Andrew to the regency of the kingdom: Buchanan, the ungrateful calumniator of Mary Stuart; ‡ so much for the presbyterians. In fine, for the reformers of your country, I find a house of lords, with the exception of many lords and of all the bishops; a small majority of the house of commons, together with the Queen and her council. Now what do we discover in the persons I have just named? I touch not here upon selfish motives of ambition, interest, and lust, nor upon the morals and the conduct of these fiery fabricators of the reformation, which present an appearance any thing but apostolic. I pass by the scandalous marriages of the priests, and of religious men with religious women, which, when recurring among us in the midst of our impious revolution, have excited contempt and ridicule. || But I ask, what was the character of the personages in the ecclesiastical hierarchy? Were they such as Jesus Christ had in view when he said: "Go, teach all nations. I am with you to the end of the world?" Was it to them that he said: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me?" Was it to them that he promised the Holy Spirit, to come and instruct them in all truth? But as these lofty and magnificent promises were made to the apostles and their successors, as the apostles, and after them the bishops only, have, at all times, according to the promises and ordinances of Jesus Christ, governed

* See Appendix II. † "The ruffian of the reformation," said Dr. Samuel Johnson. ‡ It is said that he retracted on his death bed all that he had said injurious to the character of Mary. || The bantering of Erasmus upon these sacrilegious connections is well known: "Œcolampadius has just married a tolerably pretty girl; seemingly this is the way he intends to mortify his flesh. They are mistaken in saying that Lutheranism is a tragical affair; for my part, I am persuaded that nothing is more comic, for the winding up of the piece is always a marriage, as in the comedies."

his Church, decided controversies, and declared as judges what was revealed and what not; it was an easy and simple thing to stop the mouths of the innovators, by unanimously replying to them on all sides: "Who are you, that you must meddle with doctrinal points, must decide that such a doctrine is an error, such a point of discipline a corruption, such a practice idolatrous, and that you must needs produce a schism in the Church? As for you, you are but mere laics; and you others are only ecclesiastics of an inferior order. To decide on these subjects belongs not either to the one or other of you; the power comes from a higher source. Tell your complaints, lay open your doubts, and welcome; put forth to the word your reasonings upon the matters that offend and scandalize you. Solicit and urge, if you please, your superiors in the spiritual order, your judges, the bishops, to examine into them. But respectfully await their decision, and receive it with submission: for such is the ordinance of God, and obedience is your duty, and the part you have to act in religion."

Instead of this Christian and canonical proceeding, we find them disregarding the authority of all the bishops in the world, arrogating to themselves supremacy, overturning the arrangements of the divine Legislator, introducing anarchy in its place, preaching up and commanding a separation, and tearing in pieces the body of Jesus Christ. And this is what they have called a reformation. Let them give it what name they please, it is as clear as the sun, that a reformation of such a kind will eternally bear on the face of it the character of revolt, and in the indelible stain of schism will disclose the mark of reprobation.

APPENDIX II.

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE OPINIONS THAT THE FIRST REFORMERS HAVE GIVEN FOR ONE ANOTHER, AND OF THE EFFECTS OF THEIR PREACHING.

LUTHER.

He himself bears testimony that, "while a Catholic, he passed his life in austerities, in watchings, in fasts and praying, in poverty, chastity, and obedience."* When once reformed, that is to say, another man, he says that: "as it does not depend upon him not to be a man, so neither does it depend upon him to be without a woman; and that he can no longer forego the indulgence of the vilest natural propensities."†

1. "I burn with a thousand flames in my unsubdued flesh; I feel myself carried on with a rage towards women that approaches to madness. I, who ought to be fervent in spirit, am only fervent in impurity."‡

2. "To the best of my judgment, there is neither emperor, king, nor devil, to whom I would yield; no, I would not yield even to the whole world."§

3. "He was so well aware of his immorality, as we are informed by his favorite disciple, that he wished they would remove him from the office of preaching."§

4. "His timid companion acknowledges that he had received blows from him, *ab ipso colaphos accepi.*"¶

5. "I tremble (wrote he to the same friend,) when I think of the passions of Luther; they yield not in violence to the passions of Hercules."**

6. "This man (said one of his cotemporary reformers), is absolutely mad. He never ceases to combat truth against all justice, even against the cry of his own conscience."††

7. "He is puffed up with pride and arrogance, and seduced by satan."‡‡

8. "Yes, the devil has made himself master of Luther, to such a degree, as to make one believe, he wishes to gain entire possession of him."§§

"I wonder more, O Luther (wrote Henry VIII. to him), that thou art not, in good earnest, ashamed, and that thou darest to lift up thy eyes either before God or man, seeing that thou hast been so light and so inconstant as to allow thyself to be transported by the instigation of the devil to thy foolish concupis-

* Tom. v. *In cap. I. ad Galat. v. 14.* † *Ibid. Serm. de Matrim.* fol. 119. ‡ Luth. Table-talk. § *Idem. Resp. ad Maleg. Reg. Aug.* § Sleid. Book II. 1530. ¶ Mel. Letters to Theodore. ** *Ibid.* †† Hospinian. ‡‡ *Œcolampadius.* §§ Zuinglius.

cences. Thou, a brother of the order of St. Augustine, hast been the first to abuse a consecrated nun; which sin would have been, in times past, so rigorously punished, that she would have been buried alive and thou wouldst have been scourged to death. But so far art thou from correcting thy fault, that moreover, shameful to say, thou hast taken her publicly to wife, having contracted with her an incestuous marriage and abused the poor and miserable to the great scandal of the world, the reproach and opprobrium of thy country, the contempt of holy matrimony, and the great dishonor and injury of the vows made to God. Finally, what is still more detestable, instead of being cast down and overwhelmed with grief and confusion, as thou oughtest to be, at thy incestuous marriage, O miserable wretch, thou makest a boast of it, and instead of asking forgiveness for thy unfortunate crime, thou dost incite all debauched religious, by thy letters and thy writings, to do the same.*

"God, to punish that pride of Luther, which is discoverable in all his works (says one of the first sacramentarians), withdrew his spirit from him, abandoning him to the spirit of error and of lying, which will always possess those who have followed his opinions, until they leave them."†

"Luther treats us as an execrable and condemned sect, but let him take care lest he condemn himself as an arch-heretic, from the sole fact, that he will not and cannot associate himself with those who confess Christ. But how strangely does this fellow let himself be carried away by his devils! How disgusting is his language and how full are his words of the devil of hell! He says that the devil dwells now and for ever in the bodies of the Zuinglians; that blasphemies exhale from their insatanized, supersatanized, and persatanized breasts; that their tongues are nothing but lying tongues, moved at the will of Satan, infused, per-fused, and transfused with his infernal poison? Did ever any one hear such language come out of an enraged demon?‡

"He wrote all his works by the impulse and the dictation of the devil, with whom he had dealing, and who in the struggle seemed to have thrown him by victorious arguments."||

"It is not an uncommon thing (said Zuinglius), to find Luther contradicting himself from one page to another ;§ and to see him in the midst of his followers, you would believe him to be possessed by a phalanx of devils."¶

Erasmus the most learned man of his age, he who has been called the pride of Holland, the love and delight of Great Britain, and of almost every other nation,** wrote to Luther himself: "All good people lament and groan over the fatal schism with which thou shakest the world by thy arrogant, unbridled, and seditious spirit."††

"Luther (says Erasmus again), begins to be no longer pleasing to his disciples, so much so that they treat him as a heretic, and affirm, that being void of the spirit of the Gospel, he is delivered over to the deliriums of a wordly spirit."‡‡

"In very truth, Luther is extremely corrupt (said Calvin);||| would to God he

* In Horim. p. 299. † Conrad Reis. *Upon the Lord's Supper*, B. 2. ‡ The church of Zurich, *against the Confessions of Luther*, p. 61. || Ibid. § T. II. *Repons. ad confess Lutheri*, fol. 44. ¶ Ibid, fol. 381. ** Preface to the London Edition, year 1642. †† Epistle to Luther, 1626. ‡‡ Epistle to Cardinal Sado let, 1628. ||| Cited by Conrad Schlussemberg.

had taken pains to put more restraint upon that intemperance which rages in every part of him! would to God he had been attentive to discover his vices.”*

“Calvin says again, that, “Luther had done nothing to any purpose that people ought not to let themselves be duped by following his steps and being half-papist; that it is much better to build a church entirely afresh.....”† Sometimes, it is true, Calvin praised Luther so far as to call him “the restorer of Christianity.”‡ He protested however against their honoring him with the name of Elias. His disciples afterwards made the same protestation. “Those (said they), who put Luther in the rank of the prophets, and constitute his writings the rule of the Church, have deserved exceedingly ill of the Church of Christ, and expose themselves and their Churches to the ridicule and cutting reproaches of their adversaries.”||

“Thy school (replied Calvin to Wesphal the Lutheran), is nothing but a stinking pig-stye; dost thou hear me, thou dog? dost thou hear me, thou madman? dost thou hear me, thou huge beast?”

Carlostadius, while retired at Orlamund, had so far ingratiated himself with the inhabitants, that they must needs stone Luther, who had run over to rate him for his false opinions respecting the Eucharist. Luther tells us this in his letter to the inhabitants of Strasburgh: “These Christians attacked me with a shower of stones. This was their blessing; May a thousand devils take thee! mayst thou break thy neck before thou returnest home again.”§

CARLOSTADIUS.

You shall have his portrait as drawn by the temperate Melancton. “He was (says he), a brutal fellow, without wit or learning, or any light of common sense; who, far from having any mark of the spirit of God, never either knew or practised any of the duties of civilized life. The evident marks of impiety appeared in him. All his doctrine was either judaical or seditious. He condemned all laws made by Pagans. He would have men to judgè according to the law of Moses, because he knew not the nature of Christian liberty. He embraced the fanatical doctrine of the Anabaptist immediately that Nicholas Storck began to spread it abroad..... One portion of Germany can bear testimony that I say nothing in this but what is true.”

He was the first priest of the reform who married, and in the new fangled mass that was made up for his marriage, his fanatical partisans went so far as to pronounce this man blessed, who bore *evident marks of impiety*. The collect of the mass¶ was thus worded: “Deus qui post logam et impiam sacerdotum tuorum cœcitatem *Beatum* Andræam Carlostadium eâ gratiâ donâre dignatus es, ut primus, nuliâ habitâ ratione papistici juris, uxorem ducere ansus fuerit; da, quæsumus, ut omnes sacerdotes, receptâ sanâ mente, ejus vestigia sequentes, ejectis concubinis aut eisdem ductis, ad legitimi consortium thori convertantur: per Dom. nost. etc.”

The Lutherans informs us, that “it cannot be denied that Carlostadius was strangled by the devil, considering the number of witnesses who relate it, the

* *Theol. Cal. L. II. fol. 126.* † See *Florium.* ‡ *Ibid. p. 887.* || *In admon, de lib. Concord. vi. § Tom. II. fol. 447. Sen. Germ.* ¶ Quoted in *Florium.*

number of others who have committed it to writing, and even the letters of the pastors at Bâle.* He left behind him a son, Hans Carlostadius, who, renouncing the errors of his father, entered the communion of the Catholic Church."

ZUINGLIUS.

I do not refuse (wrote Melancton), † to enter upon a conference (at Marburgh) with Cœcolampadius; for, to speak to Zuinglius is time lost.—It is not, however, a light undertaking, because their opinion is agreeable to many, who are desirous of touching the mysteries of God with their hand, and yet permit themselves to be conducted by their curiosity." Luther replying to the Landgrave, said; "Of what use is this conference, if both parties bring to it an opinion already formed and come with the determination of yielding in nothing. I know for certain that they are in error. These are the stratagems of the devil; and this is the way that every thing goes worse and worse."

"I cannot (says Zuinglius of himself) conceal the fire that burns me and drives me on to incontinence, since it is true that its effects have already drawn upon me but too many infamous reproaches among the Churches." ‡

The printer at Zurich, said Lavatherus, made a present to Luther of the translation of Zuinglius: but he sent it back with abusive language. "I will not read (said he) the works of these people, because they are out of the Church, and are not only damned themselves, but draw many miserable creatures after them. As long as I live I shall make war upon them by my prayers and my writings." ||

Carlostadius's opinion upon the Eucharist seemed to Luther to be foolish; that of Zuinglius fallacious and wicked, giving nothing but wind and smoke to Christians, instead of the true body of Jesus Christ, who spoke of neither sign nor figure. §

"The Zuinglians write that we look upon them as brethren; this is a fiction so foolish and impertinent (proclaimed the Lutherans in full synod) that we cannot be sufficiently astonished at their impudence. We do not even grant to them a place in the Church, far from recognizing as brethren, a set of people, whom we see agitated by the spirit of lying, and uttering blasphemies against the Son of Man." ¶

Brentius, whom Bishop Jewel called the grave and learned old man, declares that "the dogmas of the Zuinglians are diabolical, full of impiety, of corruptions and calumnies; that the error of Zuinglius upon the Eucharist drew along with it many others still more sacrilegious;" ** he predicted that the Zuinglians would soon shew the heresy of the Nestorians springing up again in the Church of God; "soon (says he), will the different articles of our religion disappear one after another, and to them will succeed the superstitions of the Pagans, the Talmudists, and the Mahometans." ††

* *Hist. de Cœn. August.* fol. 41. † Quoted in *Florim.* ‡ In *Parænæ ad Helvet.* t. I, d. 113. || *Schlusseemb. lib. II. Theol. Calvin.* quoted in *Florim.* p. 96. § In *Florim.* p. 109. ¶ *Epitome Colloq. Maul. Brunæ* 1564, p. 82. ** *Brentius in Recogn., Prophet, et Apost.* in fine. †† In *Bullingeri Coronide*, an. 1544.

Luther openly declared that "Zuinglius was an offspring of hell, an associate of Arius, a man, who did not deserve to be prayed for....."

"Zuinglius, (said Luther) is dead and damned, having desired like a thief and a rebel, to compel others, to follow his error."*

"Many protestants (testifies the Apologist of Zuinglius), have not scrupled to pronounce that he died in his sins, and thus to send him to hell."†

"Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the Sacramentarians, nor stood in the way of the Zuinglians, nor sat in the chair of the Zurichians. You understand what I mean."‡

CALVIN.

Calvin, being obliged to leave France to disengage himself from law affairs, went to Germany and there sought out the greater part of those who were busy in disturbing the consciences and agitating the minds of men. At Basle he was presented by Bucer to Erasmus, who resorted to the private conferences without being induced to embrace the opinions of these innovators. Erasmus, after having conversed with him upon some of the points of religion, exceedingly astonished at what he had discovered in his dispositions, turned towards Bucer and shewing young Calvin to him, said: "I see a great plague rising in the Church against the Church; video magnam pestem oriri in Ecclesia contra Ecclesiam."

"Calvin, I am aware, is violent and wayward: so much the better; he is the very man to advance our cause."|| Thus spoke a German who had taught him at Bourges, and who, together with Greek and Hebrew, had crammed him with the new doctrines of Germany.

"Calvin, (said Bucer,) is a true mad dog. The man is wicked, and he judges of people according as he loves or hates them."

Baudoin, expressing his disapprobation of the opinions of Bucer and Melancton, said that he admired their modesty, but that he could not endure Calvin, because he had found him too thirsty for vengeance and blood; propter nimiam vindictæ et sanguinis sitim.....Baudoin, induced by Cassandre, had renounced the doctrine of Calvin. He was the most learned and renowned lawyer of his time; he was born in the year 1520, and died in 1573. See his Funeral Oration on Papyrius Masson. Paris 1638. See Bibl. Mazarine.

The intolerant and sanguinary spirit of this too celebrated man appears in one of his letters to his friend, the Marquis du Poet; "Do not find fault with our ridding the country of these fanatics, who exhort the people by their discourses to bear up against us, who blacken our conduct, and wish to make our faith be considered as an idle fancy. Such Monsters ought to be suffocated, as happened at the execution of Michael Servetus, the Spaniard." The original of this letter has been preserved in the archives of the Marquis du Montelimart. We are assured that M. de Voltaire received in 1772 an authentic copy of it, according to his request, and that, after he had read it, he wrote on the margin some lines against Calvin.

* Tom. II. fol. 36, cited in Florim. † Gualter in *Apolog.* Tom. I. oper. Zuingl. fol. 18. ‡ Luth. Epist. ad Jacob presbyt. || Wolmar.

“What man was ever more imperious and positive and more divinely infallible than Calvin, against whom the smallest opposition that men dared to make was always a work of Satan, and a crime deserving of fire.”*

Calvin's erroneous opinions upon the Trinity excited against him the zeal of one, who in other respects held his sacramentarian opinion; “What demon has urged thee, O Calvin! to declaim with the Arians against the Son of God?..... It is that antichrist of the north that thou hast the imprudence to adore, that grammarian Melanchton.”† “Beware, Christian readers, above all, ye ministers of the word, beware of the books of Calvin. They contain an impious doctrine, the blasphemies of Arianism, as if the spirit of Michael Servetus had escaped from the executioner, and according to the system of Plato had transmigrated whole and entire into Calvin.”‡ The same author gave as the title to his writings: “Upon the Trinity, and upon Jesus Christ our Redeemer, against Henry Sullinger, Peter Martyr, John Calvin, and the other ministers of Zurich and Geneva, disturbers of the Church of God.”

By teaching that God was the author of sin Calvin raised against him all parties of the reform. The Lutherans of Germany united to refute so horrible a blasphemy; “This opinion (said they), ought every where to be held in horror and execration; it is a stoical madness, fatal to morals, monstrous and blasphemous.”||

“This Calvinistic error is horribly injurious to God, and of all errors the most mischievous to mankind. According to this Calvinistic theologian, God would be the most unjust tyrant.—It would no longer be the devil, but God himself who would be the Father of lies.”§

The same author, who was superintendent and general inspector of the Lutheran Churches in Germany, in the three volumes he published against the Calvinistic theology,¶ never makes mention of the Calvinists without giving them the epithets of *unbelievers, impious, blasphemous, impostors, heretics, incredulous, people struck with the spirit of blindness, barefaced and shameless men, turbulent ministers, busy agents of Satan, &c.*

Heshusius, after exposing the doctrine of the Calvinists, indignantly declares, that “they not only transform God into a devil, the very idea of which is horrible: but that they annihilate the merits of Jesus Christ to such a degree that they deserve to be banished forever to the bottom of hell.”**

The Calvinists themselves objected against this doctrine of their leader. Bullinger proves its erroneousness from Scripture, the Fathers, and the whole Church. “We do therefore (said he) prove clearly from Scripture this dogma taught every where since the Apostles' time, that God is not the author of evil, the cause of sin, but our corrupt inclinations or concupiscence, and the devil, who moves, excites and inflames it.”†† And Chatillon, whom Calvin had for a long time taken into his house and fed at his table, was one of the first to take up the pen against his benefactor and master, although he did it with all the deference due to this double title. “He is a false God (said he) that is so slow to mercy,

* J. J. Rousseau, *Lettres de la mont.* † Stancharus *de Mediot. in Calv. instit.* No. 4.

‡ Id. *ibid.* No. 3. || *Corpus doctrinae Christianae.* § Conrad. Schlusseemb. *Calvin. Theolog.* fol. 46. ¶ Francfort. 1592. ** *Lib. de Præsent. Corp. Christ.* 1560, in fine. †† Decad. III. Serm X.

so quick to wrath, who has created the greater part of men to destroy them, and has not only predestinated them to damnation, but even to the cause of their damnation. This God, then, must have determined from all eternity, and he now actually wishes and causes that we be necessitated to sin; so that thefts, adulteries and murders are never committed but at his impulse; for he suggests to men perverse and shameful affections; he hardens them, not merely by simple permission, but actually and efficaciously; so that the wicked man accomplishes the work of God and not his own, and it is no longer Satan, but Calvin's God, who is really the father of lies."*

Calvin in his turn forgets not to reproach Chatillon with his ingratitude, and adds: "Never did any man carry pride, perfidy and inhumanity to a higher pitch. He who does not know thee to be an impostor, a buffoon, an impudent cynic and one ever ready to rail at piety, is not fit to judge of anything." Towards the end of his reply, he dismisses him with the following Genevan benediction: "May the God Satan quit thee: amen. Geneva, 1558."

About 1558, appeared in London, a work written, or at least approved, by the English Bishops, against the Calvinistic sect of Puritans. Calvin and Beza are there described† as intolerant and proud men, who by open rebellion against their prince, had founded their gospel, and pretended to rule the Churches with a more odious tyranny, than that, with which they had so often reproached the sovereign pontiffs. They protest in the presence of the Almighty God, that, "amongst all the texts of Scripture quoted by Calvin or his disciples, in favor of the Church of Geneva against the Church of England, there is not a single one, that is not turned to a sense unknown to the Church and to all the Fathers, since the time of the apostles; so that were Augustin, Ambrose, Jerom, Chrysostom, &c. to return again to life and to see in what manner the Scripture had been cited by these Genevese doctors, they would be astonished that the world should ever have met with a man, so audacious and extravagant as to dare, without the least color of truth, to ill treat in such a way, the word of God, himself, his readers and the whole world." And after declaring that from this Genevese source an impoisoned, seditious and Catalinarian doctrine had been spread over England, they add: "Happy, a thousand times happy our island, if neither English nor Scot had ever put foot in Geneva, if they had never become acquainted with a single individual of these Genevese doctors!"

The partizans of Calvin have attempted, and for his credit, I wish they had succeeded in their attempt, to rescue his memory from the crime and disgrace of having the mark of infamy branded on his shoulder. "What must pass as an indisputable proof of the crimes imputed to Calvin, is that, after the accusation had been prepared against him, the Church of Geneva, not only did not shew the contrary, but did not even contradict the information, which Berthelier, commissioned by the persons of the same town, gave at Noyon. This information was signed by the most respectable inhabitants of Noyon, and was drawn up with all the accustomed forms of the law. And in the same information we see that this heresiarch, having been convicted of an abominable sin, which was always pun-

* Castellion in lib. *de Prædestin. ad Calvin.* † A Survey of the pretended holy discipline, page 44, by Bishop Bancroft.

ished by fire, the punishment that he had deserved was at the intercession of his bishop, mitigated into that of the *fleur-de-lis*..... Add to this, that Bolesque, having given the same information, Berthelier, who was still living in the time of Bolesque, did not contradict it, as, undoubtedly, he would have done, had he been able to do so, without going against the conviction of his conscience, and opposing the public belief. Thus the silence both of the whole town interested in the affair and also of his secretary, is, on this occasion, an infallible proof of the disorders imputed to Calvin.* They were at that time so uncontested, that a Catholîc writer, speaking of the scandalous life of Calvin, advances as a fact well known in England, that, "the leader of the Calvinists had been branded with the *fleur-de-lis* and had fled from his native town; and that his antagonist Wittaker, acknowledging the fact, merely replied by the following shameful comparison: Calvin has been stigmatized, so has St. Paul, so have others also."† I find also that the grave and learned Doctor Stapleton,‡ who had every opportunity of gaining information on this subject, having spent his life in the neighborhood of Noyon, speaks of this adventure of Calvin's in the terms of one who was certain of the fact. "Inspiciuntur etiam adhuc hodie civitatis Noviodunensis in Picardiâ scrinia et rerum gestarum monumenta: in illis adhuc hodie legitur Joannem hunc Calvinum sodomicé convictum, ex Episcopi et magistratûs indulgentia, solo stigmate in tergo notatum, urbe excessisse; nec ejus familiæ honestissimi viri, adhuc superstites, impetrare hactenus potuerunt, ut hujus facti memoria, quæ toti familiæ notam aliquam inurit, e civicis illis monumentis ac scriniis eraderetur."§ Moreover, the Lutherans of Germany equally speak of it as of a fact: "De Calvini variis flagitiis et sodomicis libidinibus, ob quas stigma Joannis Calvini dorso impressum fuit a magistratu, sub quo vixit."§ "And as for the affected silence of Beza, it is replied, that the disciple having acquired notoriety by the same crimes and the same heresy as his master, he merits not the confidence of any one on this point."

It is very possible and most easy to dissemble like Beza and others after him; but, surely, it is hardly possible to fabricate at pleasure the account, that an eye-witness and that cotemporaries have given us of the death of this man, an account which must excite compassion and terror in all who hear it. An eye-witness, who was then his disciple, gives the following information:¶ "Calvinus in desperatione finiens vitam obiit turpissimo et fœdissimo morbo, quem Deus rebellibus et maledictis comminatus est, prius ex cruciatus et consumptus. Quod ego verissime attestari audeo, qui funestum et tragicum illius exitum his meis oculis præsens aspexi.** The Lutherans of Germany testify, "Deum etiam in hoc sæculo judicium suum in Calvinum patefecisse, quem in virga furoris visitavit, atque horribiliter punivit, ante mortis infelicitis horam. Deus enim manu suâ potenti adeo hunc hereticum percussit, ut, desperatâ salute, dæmonibus invocatis, jurans, execrans, et blasphemans misserrime, animam malignam, exhalaret; vermibus

* Card. Richelieu, *Traite p. convert.* liv. II. pp. 319, 320. † Campian in the 3d reason, year 1582. ‡ Born in 1586. He was nearly 30 years of age when Calvin died, in 1564. § *Promptuar Catholic.* pars. 32, p. 133. § Conrad. Schlussemb, *Calvin Theolog.* lib. II. II. fol. 72. ¶ Joan Harem. Apud Pel. Cutzamium. ** Sec. *Dict. de Feller art. CALVIN.*

circa pudenda in aposthemate seu ulcere foetentissimo crescentibus, ita ut nullus assistentium foetorem amplius ferre posset."*

On this subject I find an account too curious to be omitted here. "The Dean told me that an old Canon, a familiar friend of Calvin's, had formerly related to him the manner, in which John Calvin died, and that he had learned it from a man called *Petit Jean*, who was Calvin's valet and who attended on him to his last expiring breath. This man after his master's death, left Geneva, and went to reside again at Noyon. He related to this Canon that Calvin on his death bed made much lamentation, and that oftentimes he heard him cry out aloud and bitterly bewail his condition, and that one day he called him and said; Go to my study, and bring from such a part, 'The Office of our Lady according to the use at Noyon.' He went and brought it; and Calvin continued a long time praying to God from this office: he mentioned that the people of Geneva were unwilling to let many persons visit him in his illness, and said that he labored under many complaints, such as imposthumes, the rash, the piles, the stone, the gravel, the gout, consumption, shortness of breath, and spitting of blood; and that he was struck by God, as those of whom the Prophet speaks *Tetigit eos in posteriora, opprobrium sempiternum dedit eis.*"†

This recital agrees with that of Bolse, who also cites the testimony of those who attended upon Calvin in his last illness. For after having spoken of the complaints mentioned by Beza, and of the lousy disease, about which Beza says nothing, he adds: "Those who attended upon him to his last breath have testified it. Let Beza, or whoever pleases deny it: it is however clearly proved, that he cursed the hour in which he had ever studied and written: while from his ulcers and his whole body proceeded an abominable stench, which rendered him a nuisance to himself and to his domestics, who add moreover, that this was the reason why he would have no one go and see him." (*Life of Calvin, Lyons, 1577, transl. from the Latin.*)

* Conrad. Schlusseemb, in *Theolog. Calvin*, lib. II. fol. 72. *Francof. an 1592.*

† *Remarques sur la vie de J. Calvin*, taken from the records of the chapter at Noyon, the personal examination that took place in 1614; by James Desmay, doctor of Sorbonne, vic. gen. of Rouen. This little work, dedicated to Lord Kay, earl of Ancaster, 1621, is to be found in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*.

It is the part of candor to signify that I have not seen a word about the famous *fleur-de-lis* in the work of M. Desmay, although he carefully made his enquiries in these places. I should be glad if that silence carried sufficient weight with it to destroy the very positive and public assertions of authors who wrote more than forty or fifty years before him. It appears that M. Desmay only examined the records of the Chapter and not those of the town. Moreover, it was then eighty years after the sentence had been passed upon Calvin, and we are assured that his friends had succeeded in removing it from the records of the town.

THEODORE BEZA.

Let us now pass on to Calvin's celebrated biographer. The Lutherans shall teach us in what esteem and value we are to hold him: "Who will not be astonished (says Heshusius) at the incredible impudence of this monster, whose filthy and scandalous life is known throughout France, by his more than cynical epigrams. And yet you would say, to hear him speak, that he is some holy personage, another Job, or an anchorite of the desert, nay greater than St. Paul or St. John; so much does he every where proclaim his exile, his labors, his purity and the admirable sanctity of his life."*

If we wish to refer the matter to one holding an elevated situation among the Lutherans: "Beza (says he to us) draws to the life, in his writings, the image of those ignorant and gross persons, who for want of reason and argument have recourse to abuse, or of those heretics, whose last resource is insult and abuse.... and thus, like an incarnate demon, this obscene wretch, this perfect compound of artifice and impiety vomits forth his satirical blasphemies."† The same Lutheran testifies that "after having spent twenty-three years of his life in reading more than 220 Calvinistic productions, he had not met with one, in which abuse and blasphemy were so accumulated as in the writings of this wild beast. And if any one doubt of it, adds he, let him run over his famous Dialogues against Dr. Heshusius. No one would ever imagine they were written by a man, but by Beelzebub himself in person; I should be horror struck to repeat the obscene blasphemies, which this impure atheist puts forth on the gravest subjects with a disgusting mixture of impiety and buffoonery: undoubtedly, he had dipped his pen in some infernal ink."

"Beza who was a Frenchman, (says Florimond,)‡ and the great buttress of Calvin's opinions attacked Luther's version as impious, novel and unheard of." "Truly, (retorted the Lutherans,) it well becomes a French merry-andrew, who understands not a word of our language, to teach the Germans to speak German."

MELANCHTON.

Let us confine ourselves to the judgment passed upon him by those of his communion. The Lutherans declared in full synod; "that he had so often changed his opinions upon the supremacy of the Pope, upon justification by faith alone, upon the Lord's supper and free-will, that all this his wavering inconstancy had staggered the weak in these fundamental questions and prevented a great number from embracing the confession of Augsburg; that by changing and rechanging his writings he had given too much reason to the *Epi-copali-ans* to set off his variations, and to the faithful to know no longer what doctrine to consider as true."|| They add; "that this famous work upon the theological common places would much more appropriately be called a Treatise upon Theological witticisms."

* Traduct. de Florim. p. 1048. † Schlusseburg, in *Theolog. Calvin.* lib. II. passim. ‡ p. 96. || *Colloq. Altenb.* fol. 502, 503, year 1568.

Schlusseburg goes so far as to declare; "that being struck from above by a spirit of blindness and dizziness, Melancton afterwards did nothing but fall from one error into another, till at last he himself knew not what to believe."* He says moreover, that; "Melancton had, evidently impugned the divine truth, to his own shame and the perpetual disgrace of his name."†

ÆCOLAMPADIUS.

The Lutheran's wrote in the Apology for their Lord's supper, that Æcolampadius, a fautor of the sacramentarian opinion, speaking one day to the Landgrave, said: "I would rather have my hand cut off than that it should ever write any thing against Luther's opinion respecting the Lord's supper."‡

When this was told to Luther, by one who had heard it, the hatred of the Patriarch of the reform seemed immediately softened down. On learning the death of Æcolampadius, he exclaimed; "Ah! miserable and unfortunate Æcolampadius, thou was the prophet of thy own misery, when thou didst appeal to God to exercise his vengeance on thee, if thou taughtest a false doctrine. May God forgive thee; if thou art in such a state that he can forgive thee."‡

Whilst the inhabitants of Bâle were placing the following epitaph on his tomb in the Cathedral: "John Æcolampadius, Theologian,.....first preacher of evangelical doctrine in this town and true bishop of the temple;" Luther was positive and sure, and afterwards wrote on his side, that "the devil, whom Æcolampadius employed, strangled him during the night in his bed. This is the excellent master (continues he) who taught him that there are contradictions in Scripture. See to what Satan brings learned men."||

OCHIN.

This religious man, superior of the Capuchins, leaving Italy and his order, where he had acquired a great reputation for the austerity of his life and his distinguished talent in preaching, repaired to Peter Martyr in Switzerland, where, after striking acquaintance with the Sacramentarians, he went a step farther and preached up Arianism. "He is become (wrote Beza to Diducius) a wicked lecher, a fautor of the Arians, a mocker of Christ and his Church."§

'Tis true that Ochin had, on his part, been equally severe upon the religionists of Geneva and Zurich; for in his dialogue against the sect of terrestrial Gods, he thus expressed himself in their regard....."These people are desirous that we should hold as an article of faith whatever comes from their brain. He who does not choose to follow them is a heretic. What they dream of in the night (an allusion to Zuinglius) is committed to writing, is printed and held as an oracle. Do not think that they will ever change. So far are they from being disposed to obey the Church, that on the contrary the Church must obey them. Is not this being popes? Is it not being gods upon earth? It it not tyrannizing over the consciences of men?"

Theol. Calvin, lib. II. p. 91. † *Ibid.* p. 92. ‡ *See Florim.* p. 175. || *De Miss. priv.* § *Florim.* 296.

Such were the principal authors of the religious and political excitements that desolated the Church and the world in the 16th century. They were perfectly acquainted with each other; they had seen one another, had conferred together in different conferences; they labored with emulation, if not with unanimity, at the work, which they called reform. It is impossible at the present day to form respecting their doctrine, their characters and persons, more correct notions than those, which they themselves entertained respecting them and which they have transmitted to us. It would therefore be unreasonable in us not to refer to the reciprocal testimonies they have borne to one another. Neither is it less true, that if we go by their own judgments, we cannot but consider them as odious beings and unworthy ministers, whether they have mutually done justice to each other or have calumniated each other. In a word, the only point upon which they agree is to blacken and condemn one another, and it is but too certain that this point, in which they were all agreed, is also the only one upon which they were all right.

You then who have just heard them revealing to the world their own turpitudes, will you continue any longer to take them as your guides, your masters, your fathers in faith? Hitherto you have only been taught to look upon them as extraordinary beings, endowed with sanctity, virtue, and all the gifts of heaven; and with this persuasion, you felt proud to call yourselves their disciples and children. You now see your mistake; you see what they were; they have told it you themselves. Believe them upon this point, and it is enough to make you abandon them on all others, and to abjure, since you can do it, a descent that must from henceforth be so disgraceful and ignominious in your eyes.

What could religion expect from such men? What profit could the world receive from their preaching? What actually were the effects produced? Here also they shall be our instructors. "The world grows worse and becomes more wicked every day. Men are now more given to revenge, more avaricious, more devoid of mercy, less modest and more incorrigible; in fine more wicked than in the papacy."*

"One thing, no less astonishing than scandalous, is to see that, since the pure doctrine of the gospel has been brought again to light, the world daily goes from bad to worse."†

"The noblemen and the peasants are come to such a pitch, that they boast and proclaim, without scruple, that they have only to let themselves be preached at, that they would prefer being entirely disenthralled from the word of God; and that they would not give a farthing for all our sermons together. And how are we to lay this to them as a crime, when they make no account of the world to come? They live as they believe: they are and continue to be swine: they live like swine and they die like real swine."‡

Calvin, after declaiming against atheism, which was prevailing above all in the palaces of princes, and in the courts of justice, and the first ranks of his communion. "There remains still (adds he) a wound more deplorable. The pastors, yes, the pastors themselves who mount the pulpit.....are at the present time the most shameful examples of waywardness and other vices. Hence their

* Luther in *Postilla sup. I. dom. advent.* † Id. in *Serm. Conviv. German.* fol. 55
‡ Id. on the 1st Ep. to the Corinthians, xv.

sermons obtain neither more credit nor authority than the fictitious tales uttered on the stage by the strolling player. And these persons are yet bold enough to complain that we despise them and point at them for scorn. As for me I am more inclined to be astonished at the patience of the people: I am astonished that the women and children do not cover them with mud and filth.”*

“Those whom I had known to be pure, full of candor and simplicity (says one whom no one suspects) these have I seen afterwards, when gone over to the sect (of the Evangelicals) begin to speak of girls, flock to games of hazard, throw aside prayer, give themselves up entirely to their interests, become the most impatient, vindictive, and frivolous; changed in fact from men to vipers. I know well what I say.”†

“I see many Lutherans, but few Evangelicals. Look a little at these people, and consider whether luxury, avarice, and lewdness do not prevail still more amongst them than amongst those whom they detest. Shew me any one, who by means of his gospel is become better. I will shew you very many that have become worse. Perhaps it has been my bad fortune; but I have seen none but who are become worse by their gospel.”‡

“Luther was wont to say that after the revelation of his gospel, virtue had become extinct, justice oppressed, temperance bound with cords, virtue torn in pieces by the dogs, faith had become wavering, and devotion lost.”||

It was at that time a saying in Germany, expressive of their going to spend a jovial day in debauch: “*Hodie lutheranicè vivemus*: We will spend to-day like Lutherans.”§

“And if the Sovereigns do not evangelize and interpose their authority to appease all these disputes, no doubt the Churches of Christ will soon be infested with heresies, which will ultimately bring on their ruin.....By these multiplied paradoxes the foundations of our religion are shaken, heresies crowd into the Churches of Christ, and the way is thrown open to atheism.”¶

“Did any age ever witness persons of each sex and of every age give up themselves, as ours do, to intemperance and the fire of their passions?..... (said one of the first witnesses of the reform). Men now receive as a divine oracle that saying of Luther’s that it is no more possible for a person to restrain his desires than his saliva, nor more easy for man and woman to dispense with one another than for them to go without eating and drinking. Impossible, do you hear it sung on all sides, and in all tones, impossible not to sacrifice to Venus, when the time of life arrives.”**

“Do we not see at the present day (cries out another witness) youth even giving into debauch, and if they are withdrawn from it, loudly demanding to be married. The young women also, whether already fallen, or only as yet lascivious, are perpetually throwing in your face that impudent sentence of Luther’s, that continence is impossible, seeing that Venus is not less necessary than eating; according to the new fashion, children marry and from them no doubt are to spring the valiant champions who are to drive the Turk beyond the Caucasus.”††

* Liv. sur les scandales, p. 128. †Erasm. *Epist. to the brethren of Lower Germany*.

‡ Id. Ep. a an 1523. || Aurifaber, fol. 623, v. Florim. p. 225. § Pened. Morgenstern, *Traite de l’Eglise*, p. 221. ¶ Sturm, *Ratio ineunda c. concord.* p. 2, an. 1579. ** Sylv. Czezanovius *de corrupt. morib.* †† Wigandus, *de bonis et malis German.*

“We are come to such a pitch of barbarity that many are persuaded that if they fasted one single day, they would find themselves dead the night following.”*

“It is certain that God wishes and requires of his servants a grave and Christian discipline; but it passes with us as a new papacy and a new monkery. † We have lately learned (say the religionists of our times), that we are saved by faith alone in Jesus Christ, without any other help than his merits and the grace of God.” “And, that the world may know they are not papists and that they have no confidence in good works, they perform none. Instead of fasting, they eat and drink day and night, they change prayers into swearing; and this is what they call the re-established Gospel, or the reformation of the Gospel, said Smidelin.”

“We are not to be astonished that in Poland, Transylvania, Hungary and other countries, many pass over to Arianism and some to Mahomet; the doctrine of Calvin leads to these impieties.” ‡

“Certainly, to speak the truth, there is much more conscientiousness and uprightness among the greatest part of papists than among many protestants. And if we examine past ages, we shall find more sanctity, devotion, zeal, although blind, more charity and fidelity to one another, than is seen at present among us.” ||

“Let them (the Protestants) I say, look with the eye of charity upon them (the Catholics) as well as severity, and they shall finde some excellent orders of government, some singular helps for increase of godliness and devotion, for the conquering of sinne, for the profiting of virtue; contrariwise, in themselves, looking with a lesse indulgent eye than they doe, they shall finde, there is no such absolute perfection in their doctrine and reformation.” §

This is enough, without adding to these testimonies, those of Capito, Bucer, and Melanchton, who may find place in the following letter, and without transcribing here upon England what is told us by Strype, Camden, Dugdale, and even by Henry VIII in a declaration to his parliament. ¶

Such then were the first fruits of the reformation! and such we learn them to have been from its authors themselves, from its promoters and its first witnesses. **

* Melancht. on the sixth chapter of St. Matthew. † Jacob Andræus, on St. Luke, ch. xxi. 1583. ‡ Id. Preface contre l’Apol. de Danæus. || Stubb’s motive to good works, p. 43, an. 1596.

§ A Relation of the state of Religion and with what Hopes and Policies it hath been framed and is maintained in the several states of the Western parts of the world. Sec. 48. By Sir Edwin Sandes, Printed London, 1605. ¶ See Letters of Atticus, p. 64, 65. 3rd edition, London 1811. ** I beg the reader to make also the following remarks: It is a fact that, before the reformation, infidels were scarcely known in the world: it is a fact that they are come forth in swarms from its bosom. It was from the writings of Herbert, Hobbes, Bloum, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and Boyle, that Voltaire and his party drew the objections and errors, which they have brought so generally into fashion in the world. According to Diderot and d’Alembert, the first step that the untractable Catholic takes is to adopt the protestant principle of *private judgment*. He establishes himself judge of his religion, leaves it and joins the reform. Dissatisfied with the incoherent doctrines he then discovers, he passes on to the Socinians, whose inconsequences soon drive him into Deism; still pursued by unexpected difficulties, he throws himself into universal

Their confessions, their lamentations, wrung from them by the extent and notoriety of the scandal, will eternally proclaim to the world, that with the reform were propagated vices and disorders; that in the countries where it was adopted, and in proportion as it gained ground, devotions was seen to be weakened, piety extinguished, morals deteriorated faith gradually lost in the multitude, and even among the ministers themselves; so much so that to this day, in the cradle and centre of Calvinism, at Geneva, where they abound, you will scarcely find four or five, (I know it for certain), who will consent to preach the divinity of our Saviour and teach it in their catechetical instructions. And yet there have been persons bold enough to hold out the progress of such a reform as a proof of the divine protection: as if we could acknowledge as its apostles such men as they have reciprocally described themselves to be: as if it could take parts in disorders, smile upon the propagation of vice, and favor the decaying of faith and Christianity.

doubt, where still experiencing uneasiness, he at last resolves to take the last step and proceeds to terminate the long chain of his errors in Atheism. Let us not forget that the first link of this fatal chain is attached to the fundamental maxim of *private judgment*. It is therefore historically correct, that the same principle that created protestanism three centuries ago, has never ceased since that time to spin it out into a thousand different sects, and has concluded by covering Europe with that multitude of free thinkers, who place it on the verge of ruin.

When sects beget infidelity and by infidelity revolutions, it is plain that the political safety of the states will only be secured by a return to religious unity.

LETTER III.

On the Infallibility of the Church.

WE have just seen that unity in faith and government is an absolutely essential dogma, taught by Jesus Christ, by the apostles and their successors from age to age, recognized and set forth in all the Churches and in all the communions of the Christian world. When we are all of us, without exception, once agreed upon admitting the principle, we must of necessity be agreed upon admitting its immediate and necessary consequence, which is, that Jesus Christ has supplied us with some means of preserving and maintaining this unity. For, to oblige us all, under pain of damnation, to have but one baptism and one faith, to form of ourselves but one only body, one only Church, and to leave us without the means or the possibility of arriving at this, would be inconsistent with his providence and justice. Now we all know and we loudly profess that his providence and justice have never been wanting and never will be wanting to man. We are therefore all convinced that Jesus Christ has not left us without the means of being able to fulfil his great commandment. We have only therefore to examine what are the means appointed by him, in order that, following his direction and his wish, we may all with one consent have recourse to them, that we may adopt them with sincerity and attach ourselves exclusively to them.

If each one of us were directed by an immediate revelation, a particular inspiration, there is no doubt that we never should depart from unity. But that this is not the means that providence grants us no person, how enthusiastic or fanatic soever, can reasonably doubt. Every one sufficiently feels within himself that he is not supplied with this miraculous assistance.

But perhaps Jesus Christ may have left his doctrine to our private interpretation; perhaps it was his wish, that for the explanation of his dogmas and the understanding of his law we should have no other guide but ourselves, no other judge to at-

tend to but our private opinion. If he had come to establish upon earth a variation in the belief, and a plurality in the government of his Church, well and good: for we have already seen, and soon shall still more plainly see, that the liberty of interpreting just according to our fancy and of preferring and following our own conceits, is the infallible means of introducing disputes, quarrels, and discords, and of multiplying sects *ad infinitum*: it is diametrically opposed to unity, and is therefore proscribed. We are under the necessity of looking out for another means, and we shall never find it except in a supreme authority, that speaks with a tone of authority, which presses equally upon all, which has the right to declare what is revealed and what is not, what we must believe, what we must reject; and which consequently, itself being secured from error, shall protect us from it, by subjecting us to her decisions. This is the powerful, the efficacious, the only means we can conceive capable of holding us together, circumstanced as we are. Without it, it is impossible we should ever be united; with it, impossible we should not always be so: it has therefore been established; we cannot doubt of it. It necessarily follows from the principle of unity as an effect belongs to its cause, and a consequence flows from its principles. Were there no scripture in the world, were there no monument of primitive tradition, we should not on that account be less certain of the institution of this eminent and infallible authority, when once the necessity of being but *one* in belief and in communion is demonstrated to us.

But, thank God, we have the Holy Scripture, we have the unbroken tradition of all centuries, since the preaching of the gospel, from age to age, down to our days; both attesting in the most authentic manner the positive institution of this authority.

1 ¹ Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, appeared again at different times during forty days in the midst of his apostles and disciples, to console them and give them his last instructions, speaking to them of the kingdom of God, which without doubt

means his church, and of its progress and its obstacles, of its combats and its triumphs, of the forms essentially necessary in its hierarchy and government, and of its unavoidable connections with the powers of the world. It was in his last appearance to them, that he announced to his apostles the termination of his mission and the commencement of theirs, when he solemnly addressed them in these important words: 'All power is given me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations..... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.'¹ What an authority to go and instruct! Never was such given to man before. It comes to them from the Almighty himself, and subjects the whole human race to them. What security, what confidence is there not given to their teaching by this only word, *I am with you!* Go, fear nothing: let men and devils rise up against you, their efforts, their illusions shall not prevail: I hold them under my hand: all power is given to me in heaven and on earth, and, by virtue of this power, from this moment I stand by your side, and shall unceasingly remain with you, without the least interruption, even of a single day, to the end of time. A potentate may assemble his ministers, and say to them, Go, bear my orders to all my empire, inform my people of them: he has a right to do so, he can do it: But is there one who could say, Inform *all nations* of them? Such a command could only come from him to whom the whole human race was subjected. And again, should this potentate have conquered the universe, would he presume to add: *I am with you even to the consummation of the world*; he who is feeble and mortal as ourselves, he whose power expires with his life, and is buried in the same tomb with him? This promise becomes Jesus Christ alone, and truly shews us what he is. He made it like a master; he keeps it like a god. By this promise he secures his Church against all error in its doctrine, and ensures the perpetuity of its existence, and its indefectibility to the end

¹ Matt. XXVIII. 18.

of time. Already has this promise preserved his Church against earth and hell for nearly two thousand years; and this without doubt is sufficient to convince us, that it will support it even to the consummation of the world, come when it may.

He had formerly said to the chief of his apostles, when he took from him the name he had till then borne, to give him one that was symbolical and mysterious: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'¹ and to his apostles in general; 'And I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete.....the Spirit of truth.....'² When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth.'³ These passages are so clear, that at the first glance they must immediately discover to us the stability of the edifice he proposed to raise (an edifice not to be overturned by all the powers of hell,) and the inadmissible purity of doctrine in his church, with which the spirit of all truth is to reside for ever.

I am not surprised that, intending the Apostles to represent him one day, and reserving for them a tutelary and continual assistance from on high, he should in the course of his preaching, have said to them, and also to the sixty-two disciples: 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.'⁴ A simple expression this, but yet vigorous enough to put forth at one single stroke and in the highest degree, on the one side, the authority to teach, and, on the other, the duty to obey. After this striking and peremptory word: '*He who despiseth you, despiseth me,*' how are we to account for the blindness and impiety of those Christians who afterwards had the face to despise this their doctrine? we learn moreover from St. Matthew,⁵ that our Saviour sometimes sent off the apostles to announce in the towns and cities of Judea, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand: 'And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words; going forth out of that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.' And what shall be the punishment of those, who

¹ Matt. XVI. 18. ² John XIV. 16. ³ Ibid. XVI. 13. ⁴ Luke X. 16. ⁵ Ch. X. 14.

refuse the instructions of the apostles? Let us hear it from Jesus Christ. Amen, I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of Judgment, than for that city.' This oracle, proceeding from a God-man, is sufficient to terrify us. Let those consider it and apply it, who persist with their forefathers in shutting their ears against instructions and rejecting the authority that has a right to instruct them.

I know that, in their defence, they have said that these menaces against the refractory on the one hand, and this absolute and infallible authority on the other, must be limited to the persons of the apostles and to the period of their ministry, and not be extended to their successors and to future ages. But that they may no longer attempt to persuade you of this, remark well, I intreat you, the words by which the transmission of these same prerogatives and those same powers, and the perpetuity of them in the Church are forcibly declared. In fact, did not Jesus Christ say: 'I am with you even to the consummation of the world?' did he not say: 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it?' did he not say: 'The spirit of truth shall remain with you for ever?' It is the apostles therefore in the first place, and in the succession of ages those, who were to succeed them in the plenitude of the priesthood, that he appoints as his ministers, his ambassadors, his representatives to continue and consummate his work.

Let us never be afraid to repeat to ourselves; it is glorious, it is profitable to contemplate in its origin the ministry it has pleased our Saviour to create and leave after him: for in this he truly appears as a Sovereign, as a God. He sends the ministers of his word as he had been sent, to whom all power had been given in heaven and on earth. Whither does he send them? To all nations: to every creature shall they bear his word, that is, as he himself explains it, all his commandments; all, without restriction. But will they be heard? There is a command for all the world to receive them, and a prohibition under pain of everlasting and most rigorous torments, for any one whatsoever to despise them. And now, with this strict obligation on our part of submitting to their authority, it was the part of justice

that there should not be the possibility of error or of deception to be apprehended from them: and accordingly never will hell be permitted to prevail against their instructions, and the Church which they have to establish; the divine Spirit presides eternally over it, to teach it all truth; and their doctrine, always incorruptible, shall be perpetuated from age to age, with the world for its boundaries, and time for its duration. Such is the command and the desire of our Legislator, to whom alone it belonged to command its execution.¹

¹ Never was an order so faithfully executed, never were instructions followed by so indefatigable a zeal. At first the Apostles preach in Jerusalem and in Judea. They speak with an authority that imposes and astonishes. Although poor, simple and modest, nothing intimidates them. The spirit, with which they are animated, raises them above human considerations. To the little, to the great, before the people, before magistrates, in the synagogues, and the sanhedrim, they deliver themselves with the same firmness, the same tone of confidence, of superiority, and supreme dominion. Assembled in council they hesitate not to pronounce in their own name, and in the name of God: "It hath appeared good to the Holy Ghost and to us." Thus do they write at the head of their decree. From Judea they spread themselves over the world: some proceed straight to the centre of the empire and settle there; others to its principal towns; others penetrate to its utmost extremities, some even beyond, and reach as far as India.

Every where do they announce the kingdom of God, every where do they establish the government that Jesus Christ had traced out for them, and which in their turn they again trace out for their disciples, with an injunction to transmit it to their successors. The divine master had said to them:—"Teach all nations to observe whatsoever I have commanded you:" and St. Paul says to the inhabitants of Miletus and Ephesus: "I take you to witness this day I have not spared to declare to you all the counsel of God,"*

He had told them that he should be with them to the end of ages, which necessarily supposes an unbroken chain of successors: and in all places where the word fructifies they establish bishops. "Take heed to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God."† They confer upon them the powers with which they themselves are invested, with an injunction to transmit them in their turn: "I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst ordain bishops in every city, as I also, appointed thee a bishop must be without crime."‡

Jesus Christ had said to them: "As my Father hath sent me so do I send you," and they carry themselves as his ministers: Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ;"|| and again, "For Christ therefore we are ambassadors God as it were, exhorting by us."§ Undoubtedly the ambassadors of such a

* Acts xx. 26. †Ibid. 28. ‡Titus, i. 5. ||1 Cor. iv. 1. §2 Cor. v. 20.

It seems to me impossible for any one, who is not obstinately blind, not to recognise in the Testament of our Saviour on the one hand, the establishment of a spiritual authority, always guided by the spirit of truth in every thing pertaining to revelation, and consequently incapable of leading us astray in the doctrine attributed to it; and on the other hand, the duty of submission and obedience to the instructions belonging to this authority. We are certain (for it would be blasphemy to doubt that a God-man would fulfil his promise) we are certain that this infallible doctrine, whatever changes take place in the affairs of the world, will never depart from his Church. As to obedience and submission they never will cease to be a duty. But the observation of this, as well as all other duties, depends upon the free will and

master forcibly felt the dignity of their character and knew how to assume the language belonging to it. "These things speak, and exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." *

And because authority falls away where obedience ceases, the apostles had been admonished, that they were, in case of refusal and opposition, to shake the dust from off their feet, and that the refractory would be treated more severely than Sodom and Gomorrha. The apostles also warned the faithful of the submission they owed to their bishops:—"Remember your prelates, who have spoken the word of God to you; whose faith follow." † And you, Sir, remember here your supreme governess expelling the bishops, who were preaching the word of God, rejecting, instead of following their faith. 'Obey your prelates and be subject to them.' ‡ Call to your mind, moreover your ancestors of 1558, and all those, who elsewhere called themselves reformers and reformed.

Jesus Christ had said to his apostles: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me." And the apostles, sanctioning by the same motive the deference they required of the first faithful to the instructions of their bishops: "He that despiseth (said they) these things, despiseth not man, but God, who also hath given his Holy Spirit in us." || What a contrast between the submission and respect commanded by the scripture towards bishops, and the insubordination and contempt of the reformers towards one another. We will not here repeat the painful narrative of it—both you and I have too often heard it. But let us at least learn from scripture, what conduct they ought to have adopted. They should have had recourse to the successors of Peter, to the successors of the apostles, and to them they should have addressed the same language that Cornelius, his family and his friends formerly addressed to Peter. "Now therefore, all we are present in thy sight, to hear all things whatsoever are commanded thee by the Lord." § This is what the respect enjoined by the scripture commanded them to do; you know what they did do.

* Titus, ii. 15. † Heb. xiii. 7. ‡ Ibid. 17. || Thes. iv. 8. § Acts x. 33.

liberty of man. What is certain and as clear as the light of the sun, is that all those who fulfil this duty of obedience to the instructions of the spiritual authority, can never be divided, when once this authority has spoken. What is certain and as clear as the sun, is that by their submission to its word it must necessarily follow, that they remain united together in the same Church and the same faith. The authority given by Jesus Christ to his apostles and their successors is therefore the means that he has established, and that we were looking for, to conduct to him, to cement in one body and in one and the same belief, the people of all nations, of all countries, and of all ages.

And in fact, that such actually was the intention of our divine Legislator, we learn positively and in distinct terms from the apostle St. Paul. The passage I am going to quote from his epistle to the Ephesians, deserves your particular attention. 'And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ..... that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive.'¹ St. Paul, you see, here reveals to us the interior thoughts of Jesus Christ, his wish, his positive intention in giving us his apostles, and after them the bishops, often designated by St. Paul under the name of pastors, doctors, and priests. For what reason did he establish their ministry? To assemble his saints from all parts of the world, and by their union to raise the edifice of his Church and his mystical body. And how long was the ministry of the pastors to be continued? Until all people drawn by their teaching become members of this great body, and meet successively in the union of faith to the end of the world. Thus the flocking to the same Church, adherence to the same body, agreement to the same faith are the effect, the aim, and object of the ministry established by Jesus Christ.

¹ Ch. iv. 11. 12. 13.

The conclusion of the passage confirms what has been said in a still more forcible manner. For, following two metaphors of St. Paul, Jesus Christ has given us the ministry of the pastors, in order that, being strengthened by their instructions, we may not float about in uncertainty, like children who, when left to themselves, go as chance leads them to the right or to the left without knowing where to direct their steps; and that 'we may not be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.' The doctrine of our conductors is for us, therefore, a solid and weighty anchor. Let us hold fast to this anchor, and let the winds, and tempests, and the waves work their pleasure. We shall undoubtedly, be always agitated, but never shall we be drawn away. The immovable anchor will firmly keep us within sight of port, and uniformly directed among ourselves towards one and the same centre. As for those, who being deceived by the artifices and seductions of some individuals shall withdraw from this powerful support to follow them, you will see them become the sport of the winds, having no longer any guide but their own fancy, always uncertain on a rough ocean, wandering from error to error, and, in the confusion of opinions, not knowing what course to steer, some disappear at last under the waves, and others rush distractedly into a labyrinth of endless errors. This is the history of the Church and of all the sects that have separated from it; and St. Paul's doctrine is found to be correct by the experience of eighteen hundred years.

2. ¹ But if in the small number of writings that we have upon the preaching of our Saviour and of his apostles, we find such manifest proofs of infallibility, how much more striking and more multiplied proofs must they have had, who had the happiness to hear Jesus Christ, and, after him, his disciples, explain themselves upon this important article! We know that the sacred writers have given but a very succinct account of what was said and done by our Saviour and by themselves. St. John ² goes so far as to declare that if they desired to give the full detail, the world would scarcely contain the books that must be written.

¹ Tradition of the first ages. ² Gospel. Last verse.

These words that we read upon the promises made to the Churches should therefore be regarded as some straggling evidences. They are sufficient indeed to command our belief; but they must have been more repeated and more developed by the living voice of Jesus Christ. In fact, by imposing upon some the obligation of teaching, and on others that of hearing, he must necessarily have guaranteed all against the danger of deceiving, or of being deceived. By enjoining them above all things to preserve unity among themselves from one end of the world to the other, Jesus Christ must strongly have insisted upon the only means which would keep them together, and in their turn the apostles must have repeated it over and over again in every place to which they carried the word of the gospel. They must have explained to the bishops, as they establish them, that the right and obligation of instructing would in all ages attach to the episcopal body of the Church: that decisions made by it should become for the people a rule of faith, manifest and at the same time unshakable, by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is even to be supposed that the apostles would have carried their solicitude so far as to explain the manner in which they might one day have a mutual understanding and act in concert with one another, according to the circumstances in which it should please heaven to place the Churches, in the exercise of their authority and the promulgation of their doctrine. These considerations convince me, that, of its own nature, the dogma of infallibility must have been a dogma the most clearly known from the first times of the Church. Nevertheless I make no difficulty in confessing that we do not discover so many traces of it in the three first ages as in those that follow. They are not, however, devoid of them, and some of them you shall be made acquainted with. If they are not to be found so frequently, beside that there remain but few monuments of these distant times, I shall moreover give you two particular reasons for it. Whatever certainty there should exist, at that time, that from the concurrence of the bishops there would result an infallible opinion, there was no necessity of having recourse to it to condemn heresies so evi-

dently contrary to faith, as were those of the first ages, that we know not which to be most astonished at, the audacity or the extravagance of their authors. It was a most simple and easy thing for every teacher to refuse such opinions on the ground of their manifest opposition to the doctrine just established by the apostles. The whole of the first age was filled with their disciples; the second possessed many of them, and those who were not had been for the most part instructed by the immediate successors of these disciples. Thus the world was still echoing with the voice and doctrine of the apostles: the remembrance of them was fresh and present to the minds of the faithful. Their seats, to use the expression of Tertullian, still spoke: it was sufficient in those times to say to the innovators; "The apostles taught not so; they wrote not so: your doctrine is not theirs; this is the first time we have heard such; it is false, it is impious." The second reason is the impossibility there existed during the fire of persecutions, for the bishops to assemble and to pronounce decisions in common, and to give at that time to the world splendid proofs of their authority. In those days of researches and of blood, there were no other means of meeting novelties but by private condemnations, in which, nevertheless, the bishops discover to us unequivocal traces of their opinion of their infallibility. Every one who then thought proper to dogmatise, to gain credit for his foolish ideas, was marked by the diocesan bishop, who admonished him of his error, charitably reprov'd him, refuted, threatened, and at last condemned him. The affair then passed from one to another, and according to the facility of circumstances to the neighboring bishops, to those of the province, to those of the apostolic Churches, and with more eagerness and deference still to him, who presided upon the eminent chair of the prince of the apostles.

For the greater part of the time it was from this principal see that the condemnation came, which from the centre of unity reached in every sense to the farthest extremities. The bishops adhered to it by a consent either expressed or tacit, and their separate approbations formed in their great re-union, the irre-

fragable decision of the dispersed Church: the dogma was settled, and the refractory innovator from that time marked out to all the faithful, as he would be in our days after a similar sentence, under the disgraceful name of *heretic*. Thus in the second age were Saturninus, Basilides, Valentinus, Carpocrates, Cerdo and Marcion, condemned and stigmatized as corruptors of the faith.¹

In less stormy periods, and when the Church had a respite under milder and more humane Emperors, the bishops assembled together, as far as circumstances permitted, and pronounced authoritatively upon whatever belonged to faith. We learn this from the following very remarkable passage of Tertullian: "Ac-

¹ It would be an historical error to imagine that the Churches were then isolated, without communication together, and unknown to one another, whereas from their very origin they tended to nothing but to be united together, being mutually known and of support to one another. Call to mind the circumstances of Fortunatus going to Rome to implore the authority of the Pope in the disturbance that had commenced at Corinth; of Clement, who sends him back with four deputies to labor in re-establishing order and peace; of Polycarp going in person, at his advanced time of life, to confer with the pope Anicetus upon matters of discipline; of Ignatius writing seven epistles to different Churches during the long rout, which conducted him to martyrdom, and begging of them to send trusty priests to his Church at Antioch to console it on his absence, and soon, on his death. The following is the address of a letter written on occasion of the martyrdom of Polycarp, as found in Eusebius. "The Church of God which is at Smyrna salutes all persons of the holy Catholic Church spread throughout the world." In the year 166. Eusebius has moreover preserved for us the letter of the Churches of Vienna and Lyons to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia on the martyrdom of Pothinus, Attalus, of Sabina and their companions, in 177. Even from the time of the apostles, a correspondence was opened among all the Churches and was frequent. St. Paul praises the Romans, "because their faith was spoken of in the whole world, * and because their obedience was published in every place." † He begs them to salute his fellow-laborers, Prisca and Acquila, who had for his life laid down their own necks, to whom not only he gave thanks, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles. ‡ From Asia Minor, St John, according to ancient tradition, addressed his first epistle to the Parthians, who were so remote from him and out of the Roman Empire. St. Peter wrote to the Christians of Pontus, Gallatia, Cappadocia, of Asia, Bythinia, and in fine, to all the faithful of the dispersion. St. James and St. Jude addressed their epistles to all the dispersed tribes, to all those who preserved themselves in God and in Jesus Christ.

* Ch. i. 8. † Ch. xvi. 19. ‡ Ibid. 4.;

ording to a prescribed ordinance, from all the Churches, there are in certain places of Greece councils assembled, in which the most important affairs are discussed publicly in common; and this representation of the whole Christian name obtains amongst us the greatest veneration."¹ Eusebius, speaking of the first ages, observes, "that, at the birth of heresy, all the bishops of the world rose up to extinguish the fire."² The ambitious Montanus aspires to pass for the paraclete promised by Jesus Christ.³ He seduces, by the austerity of his manners and of his precepts, and by the imposing style of his prophecies. The bishops of Asia assemble frequently at Hierapolis,⁴ and, after much precaution and a long examination, pronounce the prophecies of Montanus to be false and profane, as also those of Priscilla and Maximilla, who had left their husbands to join the extravagances of the imposter: they condemn their doctrine and their errors, and cut them off from the communion of the Church.

In 255, when peace was restored to the Christians under the Emperor Gallus, many of those who had fallen in the late persecutions demanded the peace, and the communion of the Church, and were received into it, after having undergone the rigors of the public penance. Novatian, a priest of a stern and harsh character, is indignant at the condescension that is shewn to these weak and cowardly creatures, maintains that absolution cannot be granted to those, who have fallen into idolatry, and separates from Pope Cornelius, whose see he even desires to usurp: a synod of sixty bishops condemns him at Rome, and expels him from the Church.

Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch in 262, to draw to the Christian religion Queen Zenobia, attempts to reduce the mysteries to intelligible ideas, and attacks the mystery of the Trinity, by denying the divinity of our Saviour. The bishops of the province take alarm, flock a second time to Antioch, condemn the

¹ Treatise on fasting, ch. XIII. It is to the councils here made mention of by Tertullian, that the learned Beveridge, with as much sagacity as correctness, attributes the most ancient apostolic canons. See his opinion on the apostolical canons, No. 8, in Cotelier, t. 1. p. 430. ² Ecclesiast. History, book II. ch. XXV.

³ In the year 131 under Marcus Aurelius. ⁴ In 181 under Commodus.

errors of Paul, depose him from his see, and with one voice excommunicate him. Paul, under the protection of Zenobia, obstinately persists in not quitting his see, until such time as Aurelian, becoming master of Antioch, ordains that the episcopal residence shall belong to him, to whom the bishops of Rome address their letters; judging, adds Theodoret, that he, who submits not to the sentence of those of his religion, ought to have nothing more to do in common with them.

These examples, to which others might easily be added, prove that from the first ages the bishops pronounced decidedly upon what pertained to faith, declared what was revealed and what was not, cut off from the Church those who refused to obey them, and exiled them among heretics and infidels, by pronouncing anathema upon them. And it was not because these men had taught erroneous doctrines, but because they did not submit to the authority of their ecclesiastical superiors, because they persisted in their opinions after they had been condemned and raised themselves as contumacious rebels against the decision of the bishops. ‘The proud and the contumacious are struck unto death, by the spiritual sword (said St. Cyprian), when they were cut off from the Church.’¹ Now to inflict spiritual death on proud spirits, and to devote the contumacious to eternal damnation, it was necessary that the bishops should know all their rights, that they should be convinced they could not be mistaken in their decisions; it was necessary that they should be assured that Jesus Christ was with them, that the spirit of truth never would abandon them, and that, according to the order of their master, whoever did not hear them, deserved to be treated as a heathen and a publican. Far from suspecting these venerable bishops, of not knowing their authority, one would be much rather tempted to accuse them of having exaggerated it, and extended it beyond its bounds, by attributing to their scanty synods an infallibility which had only been given to the entire body of bishops. But it must be observed that the opinions it con-

¹ “Spirituali gladio superbi et contumaces necantur, dum de ecclesia ejiciuntur.” Ep. LXII.

demned in these first synods, had already been condemned by the apostles; that, perhaps also, this small number of assembled bishops knew to a certainty the doctrine of their absent brethren, and that at all events, the acceptance of these would take place in due time, and conclude by adding to the weight of the synodical sentences the last seal of infallibility. ¹

¹ Eusebius * teaches us that the council of Antioch, after having condemned Paul of Samosata, addressed a synodical letter to Dionysius, bishop of Rome: to Maximus, bishop of Alexandria; to all the bishops, all the priests and all the deacons of the world, and to the whole Catholic Church under heaven.

“The faithful who were in Asia (says Eusebius again) assembled many times and in many parts of Asia, and, having examined the doctrine of Montanus, they condemned it; on which account these heretics were driven from the Church and deprived of Catholic communion.” “One might be surprised” observes the learned Thomassin, † “that Eusebius, after saying that the Montanists were condemned by all the Catholic Churches, is satisfied with proving this by the councils that were held in Asia. But the Churches of Asia were living in communion and in perfect understanding with the other Catholic Churches of the world; they had been informed that these revolvers were equally displeasing to the other Churches as to themselves. The silence of the other Churches confirmed the examination and decision of the Churches of Asia.”

“Pope Cornelius wrote a letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, in which he informed him what resolutions had been agreed to, by the council and by all the bishops of Italy and Africa, besides those of many other provinces. They had also published the letters of St. Cyprian and of the other bishops of Africa who were assembled.” ‡

St. Alexander, after having assembled a council at Alexandria, in which Arius and his first adherents were condemned with unanimous voice, wrote to all the bishops a synodal letter, of which Theodoret has preserved us a copy. He lays open the proceedings and the doctrine of his council. Among other things he says, “We all profess one only Catholic and apostolic Church, always invincible, although all the world conspire to make war upon it, and victorious over all the impious attempts of the heretics, placing her confidence on the word of the Father of the family, *Take courage, I have conquered the world.*” And now see how he concludes. “Condemn them with us after the example of your brethren, who have written to me and subscribed to the note which I sent you together with their letters. There are some from all Egypt, from Thebais, from Lybia, Pentapolis, Syria, Pamphylia, Asia, Cappadocia, and the neighboring provinces. I am expecting to receive similar letters from you; for after many other medicines, I am led to think that the agreement of the bishops could complete the cure of those whom they have led astray.” ||

He sent these decrees to all the Churches, and from their unity they acquired

* Book VII. † *Traite dogma. et hist. des moyens dont on s'est servi pour maintenir l'unité dans tous les temps.* Ch. II. Art. 7. ‡ Eusebius Book VI. on Novatian. || Athan. I. *Disc. against Arius.*

The facts I have just adduced speak for themselves. The bishops have displayed their authority in all its possible extent; the faithful have recognised it by complying with the sentences passed upon the heretics, with whom they ceased from that time to hold any communication. Thus the usage and the practice of the primitive Church sufficiently prove that the dogma of infallibility was recognised in it. We see, moreover, in the few writings that are come down to us from these times, that the fathers considered this dogma as a truth generally established.

Let us return to the beautiful epistles of St. Ignatius, of which I spoke in my preceding letter. 'While among you, I loudly called upon you and said: Be united to the bishop.¹ Avoid divisions as the source of evils: all of you follow the bishops, as Jesus Christ follows his Father.'² You see the episcopal authority marked out as the means of preserving unity — 'I bid you farewell in Jesus Christ. Be submissive to the bishops and the priests, according to the command of God.'³ I exhort you to do every thing in divine concord, the bishop presiding in the place of God."⁴ It is still to the episcopal chair that he attaches the bond of unity. 'You must concur with the aid of the bishops, as you do; for your worthy priests are in harmony with them, like the chords of a lyre, and your union forms a wonderful harmony. Take care, therefore, not to resist the bishop, that you may be subject to God; for all those whom the Father of the family sends for the government of his house, you ought to receive as you would him that sends them,'⁵ We will not press the words of St. Ignatius so far as to conclude that he attached infallibility individually to each bishop. Those of whom he speaks were personally known to him. He knew that their doctrine was pure and conformable

their final strength. This is the remark of Bossuet upon the decision just adduced to the synod of Alexandria against Arius. *Hist. of the Variations.* Book VII. Art. 69.

¹ To the Philadelphians. ² To the Christians of Smyrna. ³ To the Christians of Tralles. ⁴ To the Christians of Magnesia. ⁵ To the Ephesians.

with the universal doctrine; that union reigned between them and the priests, between them and all those whom the Father of the family had sent for the government of his house. Now this unity would have ceased, immediately that a bishop taught any dogma contrary to the received doctrine of the Church, as we have seen in the case of Paul of Samosata, condemned and deposed by his brethren. Thus, then, when we come to analyze the matter, we find, that it was upon the conformity with the general doctrine of the bishops, that St. Ignatius founded, on the one hand, the particular authority of each bishop, and, on the other, the entire submission he required to be paid to them by the people; and, by a more remote consequence, it appears necessary, according to his principles, that the doctrine of the great majority of the bishops must have been infallible, otherwise the faithful, by conforming themselves to the bishops according to the command of God, might have been drawn into error, without any means of being preserved from it. In a word, if we understand the doctrine of this great man, he teaches us that the unity of the Church depends upon the submission of the faithful to their particular bishops, and on the agreement of the bishops among themselves, that is to say, that the supreme authority given to the body of the bishops is the safeguard of unity. We find the same doctrine taught one hundred and forty years afterwards by the illustrious doctor and martyr of Carthage. 'The Catholic Church is one,' wrote St. Cyprian, 'and the bishops joined together are the bonds of this union.'¹ These few words comprise the whole subject of this and the preceding letter: they give you in abridgment the entire theory of the unity and the infallibility of the Church.²

Fifty years before St. Cyprian, Irenæus,³ a disciple of St.

¹ Ep. XXXIII. ² "There is but one episcopacy spread on all sides in many bishops united together." Cyprian, in his *Ep. to Antodianus*, bishop of Africa, and again, in his book *On Unity*; "The Catholic Church is united in all its parts and consolidated by the cement (glutino) of the bishops adhering to one another. We, who are bishops and who preside in the Church, we ought particularly and more closely to embrace and defend this unity." ³ Born in 120, martyred under Marcus Aurelius in 203.

John through Polycarp and Papias, and, after the martyrdom of St. Pothinus, second bishop of Lyons, wrote his great work *Upon Heresies*. Hear what he says in Book IV. ch. XLIII: ‘For this reason we must obey those who preside in the Church, who hold their succession from the apostle, as we have shewn, and who, with the succession of the episcopacy, have received the certain grace of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father.’ Where the certain grace of truth is found, there, assuredly, no error is to be apprehended: and there, of course, must be found infallibility. And again in the XLV. chapter of the same book, speaking of the successors of the apostles, he adds: ‘It is they, who preserve the faith that we hold of God alone, who made all things; they who expound to us the scriptures, without danger of errors.’ Let us then boldly follow their exposition of scripture, confident as we are with St. Irenæus, that we can never go astray, while we follow their steps, nor fall into error, while we adopt their interpretations.

Tertullian,¹ so celebrated for his writings, and above all for his excellent book on the *Prescriptions* against the heretics, addresses them in the following ironical strain. “Well! then, for your satisfaction, we will suppose that all the Churches have fallen in error!.... not one of them has been looked upon by the Holy Spirit; not one directed in truth by the Spirit which Christ had sent, and which he had asked of his Father to be for his people the teacher of truth! This agent of God, this vicar of Christ has then we will suppose neglected his ministry, by permitting the Churches to think and believe otherwise, than he had himself announced to them by the mouth of his apostles.” Tertullian observed in this passage that, according to the heretics, it would follow that all the Churches had fallen into error, because they all were agreed upon the articles, which the heretics rejected. He sets off the absurdity of such a supposition, by introducing the perpetual assistance of the Holy Spirit, promised to the Church by Jesus Christ. It was his belief therefore that the Church was always guided in the truth by the Holy Spirit, and

¹ Died in 216.

under its influence always secure from error: and this his belief was founded upon the same reason and the same promises that have induced the belief of it in all Christian ages before and after.

If I have prolonged the discussion of the three first ages, it is because they are in general less known, because it was necessary to shew that the promises of Jesus Christ, being then more recent, must on that account have been more lively in the remembrance of men; because the bishops who illustrated the rising Church were well acquainted with the rights and obligations of their ministry, and because, to discover with more splendor the dogma of infallibility, with which their minds were profoundly impressed, nothing more was wanting in those times than the appearance of favorable circumstances. These circumstances did at last appear when Providence called Constantine¹ to the throne, and seated religion on it with him. Soon were the bishops of the whole world beheld assembling at Nice,² where the doctrine of Arius was solemnly condemned and banished. The doctrine of Macedonius was afterwards treated in the same manner at the general council of Constantinople,³ that of Nestorius at Ephesus:⁴ that of Eutychites at Chalcedon.⁵ It would be superfluous to mention all the œcumenical councils that distinguished the following ages up to the council of Trent. Let but an attentive observation be made of the circumstances, and motives which caused the convocation of these councils, the manner of proceeding adopted by the fathers in them and the reception their decrees met with in the world, and it will be perceived that in all ages there prevailed a general persuasion that the episcopal authority was the means instituted by Jesus Christ to preserve unity among all his disciples, and that the opinions adopted by the majority of the bishops are for all an infallible rule of faith. It would be tedious to pursue in detail this examination of the councils: let us confine ourselves to that of Nice.

Arius, being condemned by a synod at Alexandria, makes

¹ In 306. Proclaimed afterwards at Rome, by the Senate, first Augustus, 313.

² In 325. ³ In 381. ⁴ In 431. ⁵ In 451.

his complaint to several bishops in other parts, explains to them his principles, declares his submission, implores their light and assistance, succeeds in making himself some friends, some protectors and a great number of proselytes: his cause soon becomes alarming on account of the seditions, tumults, and murders which it occasions. Constantine endeavors to apply a remedy to it, but fails in his attempt. In the mean time, the flame is still on the increase, and the Emperor, together with the bishops whom he consults, sees no other means of extinguishing it, besides the authority of a general council. He convokes it at Nice. Upon the news of this, the minds of men become calm, parties relent, each one flatters himself that he shall soon see his cause triumph, and remains at peace in the expectation of the definitive decision to be pronounced at Nice. Hither assemble from Europe, Africa and Asia, patriarchs, metropolitans and bishops, to the number of 318, and in their attendance a great number of doctors, and at the head of all, the celebrated Osius of Cordova, as proxy for Sylvester, the head of the Church. Arius is cited to appear—many of his partisans were there already. He comes in person to give an account of his opinions. You see, so far the universal opinion well proved. Every thing bows before the authority that is going to pronounce sentence. Arius and his party pay homage to it, and submit beforehand. The august and venerable senate opens its sessions, Constantine appears in all his imperial pomp. I pray you, remark this passage, in the answer he gives to an harangue that had just been addressed to him in the name of all the fathers. ‘The rage of division spreading through the minds and penetrating the hearts of men, excites them one against the other, troubles peace, ruins faith by rendering it uncertain, fills the country with disorder and tumults, and after all this, exposes religion to the contempt, the ridicule, and the blasphemy of our adversaries (the pagans), who take occasion from thence to tear it in pieces. To remedy so great an evil, I have thought nothing to be so powerful as the whole Church acting with authority in this holy assembly that represents it.’¹

¹ Eusebius, Sozomen, Theodoret, Nicephorus.

The first business, the council entered upon, was that of Arius.¹ It sets about it with that maturity and wisdom that was to be expected from so great and learned an assembly, in which also were sitting a great number of confessors of the faith, mutilated in the persecution of Licinius and covered with scars, which Constantine kissed with respect. Arius and his doctrine were unanimously condemned, the consubstantiality of the Word recognised and fixed to the immortal symbol, which is still to this day repeated by all Christians. The fathers of Nice, at the end of their labors, addressed a synodal letter to all the Churches under heaven, to notify their decisions and to offer them to the acceptance of all the Bishops in the world. In it they say; 'that with one voice it had been resolved to anathemize Arius and his impious doctrine.' They had already presented the decree of his condemnation to the Emperor,² who had received it with the highest veneration as if it had been drawn up by heaven itself and had been sent to him on the part of God; he added, that whoever would not submit should be banished as a rebel to a divine decision. This menace reduced to obedience Arius and the fautors of his doctrine, who till then had refused to subscribe to the decision of the council. Constantine afterwards dispatched two letters, one encyclical, addressed to the Churches in general, the other to the Church of Alexandria, where the heresy had first appeared. In the first are found these words: 'Whatever is done in the councils of the bishops ought to be considered as the will of God.' And in the second, after enumerating the tumults, discords, and schisms that the heresy had produced, he adds: 'It was in order to put an end to all these that, by the will of God, I assembled so great a number of bishops at Nice.' And at the conclusion: What three hundred bishops have ordained is nothing else than the sentence of the only Son of God: the Holy Spirit has declared the will of God by means of these great men, whom he inspired. Therefore let no one doubt, let no one delay; but all of you return in good

¹ See the *Histoire de l'Arianisme*. Liv. 1. Maimbourg. ² Rufinus, Gelasius.

earnest into the way of truth.¹ Before he dismissed them, he re-assembled the bishops in his palace, where he delivered to them an excellent discourse to recommend to them the peace of the Church, which they would preserve by preserving inviolably, amongst themselves, a perfect union of mind and heart, in unity of doctrine and sentiment, conformably with what the Holy Spirit had just established by their means in the council.²

Eusebius, of Cesarea,³ who a long time opposed the word consubstantial, afterwards wrote the life of Constantine, in which he praises his indefatigable zeal to secure the superiority of that salutary faith, which the Holy Spirit himself had truly promulgated by the holy fathers assembled at Nice.

After the condemnation of Arius, they examined the question of the paschal solemnity; all the fathers agreed to observe it on the same day, and the orientals promised to conform to the practice of all the other Churches, that is to say, of Italy, of Africa of Lybia, of Egypt, of Spain, Gaul, Britain, Greece, Asia, and Pontus. ‘The council of Nice,’ says Athanasius, in his apology, has been doubly useful, because the people of Syria, Lybia, Mesopotamia, had not been accustomed to celebrate the pasch on the proper day, and because the Arian heresy had arisen against the Church. The Catholic world assembled in council. The day of the pasch was regulated for all, and Arianism was condemned. It is true that for the day of the pasch they used these terms, it hath seemed good to us, after the example of the apostles, in order that all the world may obey—but to regulate faith they said: the Catholic Church believes: and immediately they add the entire confession, to shew that it was not a new doctrine, but that of the apostles, and that what they had put down in writing was not their own invention but derived from the apostles.’

But if afterwards Arius and some of his adherents retracted

¹ Thus it was that the decision of the council was proposed as a divine oracle, after which there was nothing more to be examined; for we are not to doubt that these letters of the Emperor were dictated by the bishops, or at least drawn up according to their instructions. This is the reflection made by the judicious Fleury, after introducing the letters of the Emperor. *Hist. Eccles.* t. p. 159. edit. in 4to. ² *Hist. de Arianisme.* ³ Euseb. Sozom.

their word and the obedience they had sworn, the passions, incident to men explain this perjury but too well; we should doubtless lament it, and deplore the fatal consequences it produced upon the unfortunate reigns of Constantius and Valens. But it is enough for our present purpose to know that Arius and his partisans had recognised this authority before it explained itself; and that they themselves had afterwards submitted to its decision, and that they did not venture to revolt against it for a considerable time after their condemnation. With regard to the other bishops in various parts, who had not been able to assist at the council, they almost all applauded its decrees: the most enlightened doctors took up the defence of them, as soon as they were called in question, and generally all nations conformed to them. The Nicene Creed, already adopted by the universal Church, was for the second time universally proclaimed at the council at Constantinople, and there received the additions made necessary by the heresy of Macedonius against the Holy Ghost. From the sixth age, it was publicly recited in the Greek Churches, according to the ordinance of Timotheus, patriarch of Constantinople; sung in the Churches of Spain, according to the form of the Oriental Churches, by the decree of the council of Toledo:¹ in Gaul and Germany towards the end of the eighth century; towards the year 1014, in all Italy, by the constitution of Benedict VIII.; in fine it has been kept by the reformation; and in our days it is still held in honor among almost all protestant communions.

And to say a word upon the individual opinion of the most celebrated doctors of the Church, the learned Eusebius of Caesarea, who, in the council, held out a long time against the term consubstantial, was not on that account prevented from writing afterwards,² that the Holy Spirit himself had truly promulgated the faith, by the instrumentality of the fathers of Nice. He had already reckoned among the evils inflicted by Licinius on the Church, the prohibition to assemble councils. 'For,' adds the historian, 'important controversies can never be terminated with-

¹589—²In the life of Constantine.

out a synod.¹ We know with what strength, spirit and eloquence Athanasius supported during a struggle of 50 years, against the Semiarians, the decisions of the council of Nice. Threatened with exile when in his see, and with death in his exile, he evinced the same courage, and had not less credit at the extremities of Gaul, at Treves, than in Egypt, and at Alexandria. From all the places, to which he was constrained to take refuge, he combated with unshaken firmness that heresy armed as it was with the power of two Emperors, and many times in synod carried off in triumph the formula of Nice; as the rule of the orthodox faith.² He calls it the word of God, the divine and sacred oracle of the Holy Spirit. 'What can be wanting to the council of Nice that we can desire further? The Indians are not ignorant of it, and all the Christians of barbarous countries revere it. The word of God, who has spoken by this œcumenical council, will remain for ever.' See now how he commences the profession of faith, which the Emperor Jovian had demanded of him in 363, after the agitated and unfortunate reigns of Constantius and Julian. 'Know then, O Emperor, that the faith, which the fathers of Nice have acknowledged, is the faith that has been preached from the beginning; know that it is followed by all the Churches of the world, whether in Spain or in England, in Gaul, in all Italy, in Dalmatia, Dacia, Mysia, Macedonia, and all Greece, in Pamphylia, Lycia, Isauria, Egypt, Lybia, Pontus and Cappadocia. To these we must add all our neighboring Churches, as well as those of the east, except a small number, who are in the party of the Arians. We know all those whom we have just named and others still more distant: we even have letters from them.' 'Cyril of Alexandria expresses himself of the fathers of Nice with the same veneration. 'Truly, with them was Jesus Christ, who said, when two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst of them, for how should we be permitted to doubt that Jesus Christ himself invisibly presided over this great and holy assembly.' St. Hilary, St. Basil, and St. Jerome hold the same language. St. Ambrose,³ whose senti-

¹ Eccles. His. B. T. c. LI. Ep. to the Bishops of Africa. ² Ep. xxxv, Lib. v.

ments ought to be discoverable in every Christian heart, hesitated not to declare: 'I embrace the decrees of Nice, from which neither death nor the sword shall separate me.' Saint Augustine calls it 'the council of the world, whose decrees are equal to the divine commandments.' Speaking of the error of Saint Cyprian upon rebaptization, he says, that 'this holy martyr would have adhered to the decision of the Church, if the truth had been cleared up and declared in his time by a general council,'¹ as it afterwards was at Arles and Nice. From these principles, which are also ours, this great man concluded in another passage, as we also conclude with him, 'that disputes may be tolerated before the matter is decided by the authority of the Church, but that to dispute after such decision, is to root up the foundation of the Church itself.'²

Pope Leo declares that, "they could never be reckoned among Catholics, who would not follow the definitions of the venerable synod of Nice, or the regulations of the great council of Chalcedon."³ "I declare, wrote Gregory the Great, that I receive and venerate the four first general councils, as the four books of the holy gospel."⁴ Socrates, who wrote his ecclesiastical history a century after the council, says, that "the fathers of Nice, although for the greater part simple and unlearned, could not fall into error, because they were enlightened by the light of the Holy Spirit."⁵

It would certainly be very easy, were it not long and tedious to produce here many other passages which the writings of the fathers of the Church furnished upon this subject. You will perhaps be more pleased to learn that the authority of the fathers of Nice has found defenders even amongst the reformers. The most learned and the most moderate protestant theologians have made no difficulty in submitting to the decisions of the four first general councils; and upon that of Nice hear how, amongst others, Bull, bishop of St. David's one of the most skilful divines of your English Church, expresses himself. "In this council

¹ B. II. iv. on Bapt. ² Serm. xiv. *de verb apost.* ³ Ep. lxxviii. ⁴ B. I. Ep. xxiv. ⁵ B. I. ii.

was discussed one of the principal articles of the Christian Religion, (the divinity of Jesus Christ.) If upon a leading article we can imagine that all the pastors of the Church could have fallen into error and led the faithful astray, how shall we be able to defend the word of Christ, who promised his apostles, and in their persons, their successors, to be always with them? a promise, which would not be true, since the apostles were not to live long, were it not that their successors are here comprised in the persons of the apostles."¹ You see the infallibility of the council of Nice here recognized by the learned bishop of St. David's as resting on the firmest foundation, the promises of Jesus Christ, whose word shall never pass away. The reasoning of Dr. Bull, is the reasoning of antiquity, of all the fathers, and of the Church at all times. It might and it ought to have led him to the Church, and yet did not do it. A deplorable example this of the tyranny, that the prejudices of education and the miserable interests of the world exercise over even well disposed minds.²

What I have been saying on the circumstances, preceding, accompanying, and succeeding the first general council, ought, one would imagine, to be sufficient to convince you that before and after this assembly, as well as during its sitting, it was the general persuasion that infallibility had been promised to the Church, to maintain unity of doctrine and government. You have seen the motives that induced the bishops to desire its con-

¹ *Defence of the Nicene Faith.* pref. No. 2. p. 2. ² During my residence in England, there fell into my hands a very voluminous collection of notes upon Ecclesiastical History. They were loose and superficial, indicating much reading but little learning. The author, who called himself a theologian, alluding to the passage above quoted, evinces much spleen against the learned bishop. He observes, nevertheless, and with more reason than he appears to think, that with such principles upon the authority of the Church, Bull ought to have taken a bold step, and finished the business by passing over to the Church of Rome. There is not less justness in this observation, than truth in the doctrine that gave rise to it. Happy would have been both the critic and the bishop, had the former learned the principle from the latter, and had both been blessed with courage enough to follow up its consequence! This author, whose light notes have left but few traces in my mind, is called, to the best of my recollection, Doctor Jortin.

vocation, and the Emperor to effect it. You have seen all parties acknowledging beforehand the authority of the great council, and prepared to submit to its decisions. You have heard of the illustrious testimonies, that have since been given of it; its formulary of faith applauded throughout the world, received as coming from heaven itself; celebrated in hymns, in the solemnities of worship, and in the Liturgies; engraven upon the memories of all the faithful, and repeated from age to age, from one end of the world to the other, by every Christian tongue. As to the opinion which prevailed among the fathers of this council, whatever distrust they might individually have had of their own lights, there was undoubtedly not one of them, who did not remember the promise of Jesus Christ, and who upon his word, was not convinced that the spirit of truth hovered invisibly over the assembly to direct its decisions. You have already heard one of those who sat among the judges of the faith, Eusebius of Cesarea, and also Athanasius, who had the honor of accompanying Alexander, his patriarch, to the council, and of distinguishing himself by his erudition and eloquence. There will be no necessity for recurring here to their testimonies. The anathemas pronounced by the council will suffice. They plainly shew an entire confidence of infallibility. A society that does not possess it, and that from its own confessing may be surprised into error, might indeed exclude from its bosom those who should refuse to conform to its laws; but to denounce to execration, to devote to eternal malediction, and to deliver up to satan, those who would not receive its decisions, this goes far beyond the rights and the power of man; it belongs only to a society, convinced that it possesses an extraordinary privilege, and which, feeling itself under the protection and direction of the Holy Spirit, is firmly persuaded that, with such a guide, it cannot err in its decisions.

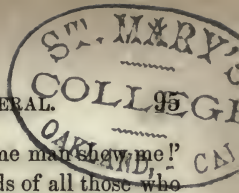
Moreover, this principle of authority, so solidly established by tradition and holy scripture, gains greater strength, when contrasted with the principle of the reformation. It is evident that this would never have gained ground, any more than any

other heresy before it, if it had submitted itself, as it should have done, to the authority that condemned it. It was obliged to commence its operations by rising up in revolt against that authority; and it was necessarily obliged to labor, in the first place, to overturn the rampart, which alone would have arrested its progress, and which till that time had been generally held in the world to have been established by Jesus Christ himself. The reformers therefore were continually repeating to the people, that all men were subject to error; and that no man, nor assembly of men, could arrogate a claim to infallibility; that it was the attribute of God, that the scripture, inspired by him, alone shared it with him; that the scripture alone was the rule of our faith, sufficiently clear, at least in every thing essential, for each one to understand it, to decide from it between good and bad doctrine, and thus form his religion according to his conscience. Let us pause a little on this principle, which substitutes private judgment for the uniform doctrine of the episcopal body.

The scripture alone, the rule of our faith! The scripture sufficiently clear and intelligible to all minds! Begin then by teaching men how to read. Three fourths of mankind cannot read, or they read so imperfectly that they hesitate at every word. Such are laborers, artificers, and those condemned to gain their bread by the sweat of their brow; who have neither the ability nor the time, nor the instruction necessary for learning.

The scripture alone, the rule of our faith! sufficiently clear and intelligible to all minds! In the Acts of the apostles¹ we read as follows, "Philip rising up went: and behold a man of Ethiopia, a Eunuch, of great authority under Candace, the Queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge over all her treasures, had come to Jerusalem to adore. And he was returning sitting in his chariot, and reading Isaias, the prophet. And the spirit said to Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot; and Philip running thither, heard him reading the prophet Isaias, and he said, Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou

¹ Ch. VIII. v 27.



readest? Who said, and how can I, unless some man show me? Put, in these days, the scriptures into the hands of all those who know how to read, and ask the greater part. Do you understand what you read? If they are as honest as the Eunuch of Candace, they will answer you together with him; How can we unless some man shew us?

The scripture alone, the rule of our faith! sufficiently clear and intelligible to all minds! And how comes it then that the sublime reformers, those even who were the first to make the scriptures the only rule of our faith, have never been able to come to an understanding upon the sense of this same scripture? How comes it that Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, and those sprung from them, could not manage for their lives to agree together? I should not so soon finish, were I to enumerate all their differences. Here is a specimen: "It is clear from scripture, says Zuinglius, that we receive only bread and wine in the sacrament. You deceive yourself, replies Calvin, it is clear from scripture that the true body and true blood are present; not in the sacrament, but to him that worthily receives it. You neither of you understand any thing about it, exclaims Luther, stepping in between them, you are two asses; you hold this doctrine from the devil. It is clear from scripture, adds he in a more subdued tone, that we must accuse the Holy Spirit of lying, or believe that the sacred body and blood of Christ are truly and really present in the sacrament, as well as for him that receives it." If the scripture is so clear and intelligible, how do you account, I say, for their eternal disputes? and how came the reformation by following one and the same guide, to go astray in so many different directions? ¹ Often have they endeavored

¹ "It is of great importance (wrote Calvin to Melancthon) that there should not be transmitted to future ages any suspicion of the divisions that exist amongst us: for it is beyond imagination ridiculous, after having quarrelled with all the world that we should agree so little among ourselves from the very commencement of our reform."* He was speaking here of the disputes upon the sense of the words, *This is my body*.

Luther spoke still better, on the same subject: "If the world is to last much

* Calv. *Epist. ad Melancthon*. p. 145.

to rally, often have they endeavored to conciliate all parties by some general and well drawn up formulary; but as yet it has been all to no purpose. To facilitate so desired a reconciliation, some have since conceited that they found superfluities in the gospel, and reduced it to what is simply necessary, to fundamental points: as if Jesus Christ had taught useless dogma or precepts; as if he had ordered his apostle to teach all nations, to observe all things whatever he had commanded them,¹ and had not told them that the Holy Ghost should teach them all things;² as if St. Paul had not protested to the Christians of Miletus and Ephesus, that he had declared to them all the counsel of God and had not spared to do so;³ and as if St. James had not written, 'Whoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all!'⁴ And still, even

longer, I do declare, considering all these different interpretations of the scripture, there is no other means remaining for us to preserve the unity of the faith, than that of receiving the decrees of the councils and taking refuge under their authority."* He therefore ultimately felt the necessity of unity in faith, and the impossibility of effecting it without the supreme authority of the Church? Is it possible that after two hundred years more of experience, protestants should not be still more struck with, and convinced of the justness of this reflection?

Melanchton and Chatillon, stupified with the confusion of ideas that prevailed among them, declared the former, "that it was well enough known whom to avoid, but not whom to follow;" the latter "that he doubted very much whether truth was or was not on their side."

"But in fine, in what a situation are our followers?" exclaims Duditius: "dispersed, agitated by every wind of doctrine, carried away from one side to to another. What is their opinion in religion to-day, you may, perhaps, ascertain; but what will it be to-morrow, it is impossible to conjecture. In what, I pray, do all those agree who make war upon the Roman Pontiff? Run over all their articles from the first to the last, you will see nothing advanced by any one of our teachers, but it is immediately exclaimed against by another as an impiety. They make themselves a new creed every month, *menstruam fidem habent.*"†

"The papists object to us our dissensions: I confess we cannot sufficiently deplore them. I confess, also, that the simple are troubled at them, so far as no longer to know where is the truth and whether there still remains for God a Church upon earth."‡

"Nothing brings so much discredit on our gospel, as our internal dissensions."||

¹ St. Matt. XXVIII. 18. ² St. John, XIV. 26. ³ Acts, XX. 26. ⁴ Ch. II. 10.

* Luther against Zuinglius and Ecolampadius. † In the Theological Epistles of Beza. p. 13. ‡ George Major. on the confusion of dogma. || Melanch. cons. Theolog. p. 249.

after all their arbitrary restrictions, or rather, sacrilegious reductions, they are no better agreed upon this small number of fundamental points.¹ Surely, were it only from shame of their disputes and intestine divisions, their eyes should at last be opened, and so long an experience should have convinced them that the principle from which they started, is only calculated to swell the learned with pride, and to bring into action and opposition the passions of men. It is not the spur but the rein that is wanted for the learned and the proud; they stand no less in need of a guide than the illiterate; and the wisdom of our legislator appears splendidly in this, that both were equally subjected to the yoke of the same authority, that both may be held in the unity of the same doctrine.

Let us therefore conclude, Sir, that scripture alone, far from being a rule of faith common to all mankind, cannot even be so for any particular class of man: not for that of the learned, who have hitherto made no other use of it than to lose themselves in interminable disputes upon many important matters; not for the greater number of persons, who, although able to read, are unable to understand; not for the class of ignorant and simple men and women so general in the world, to whom letters are totally unknown. Let this be the only rule under heaven, and all the doctors of the world shall consume their days in learned dissertations, in obstinate and fruitless quarrels about the sense of the scripture; and men of ordinary education shall go out of

¹ "Where is the man, said a Calvinist, * who can decide to the satisfaction of all, what are the dogmas necessary for salvation and what precisely are sufficient? I would take such a one to be a great prophet." †

Another Calvinistic author, in his book on the re-union of Christianity, had written, "that others who seemed to have had in view this general reconciliation, had not sufficiently distinguished what is fundamental from what is not so." The equally Calvinistic author of the Remarks upon this work, makes an observation upon this passage, which also is worthy of notice; What (says he) is this man thinking of? Does he imagine that it is so easy a thing to agree upon what is fundamental and what is not so? Has it not hitherto been an *insurmountable difficulty*." ‡

* Arnald. Polenburg in *præst viror. ep.* † See *Prejuges legitimes* de M. Nicole, p. 358. ‡ Nicole *Prejuges legitimes centre les Calvinistes*, p. 358.

life without ever knowing what to hold of all they have read; and the multitude of the ignorant and simple, because they cannot read, shall be condemned never to know Jesus Christ! But it is not so: and this misfortune is much more to be feared for the learned than for those little ones, whom the world despises, and whom Jesus Christ has preferred for the uprightness and simplicity of their soul: he loved them too much not to put himself within their reach and be known by them. 'I confess to thee, O Father,' did he exclaim in an effusion of tenderness for them, 'because thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones.'¹

Suppose a legislator, a founder of an empire or republic, without troubling himself about creating magistrates and tribunals, were to deliver a code of his laws into the hands of his people and say to them; 'Take, read and interpret my laws yourselves: they are clear and intelligible. Above all, let there be no more law suits, but let fraternal love, concord, and unity dwell among you all;' would not this be an admirably contrived republic! And what would follow from this admirable and novel regulation? In the first place, three parts out of four, not knowing how to read and having no time to lose, if they are to get a living, would throw the code aside, and care nothing about its contents. The others would read in it whatever their interest might make them desirous of finding. And then commenting upon the text at pleasure, no one would be wrong; each one without contradiction would have the law on his side. Thus, cavils and disputes without end or measure, implacable hatreds, irritated hearts, would prevail through the four quarters of the empire. The making such an hypothesis, is a folly that stares us in the face. Away with it to some other world if you like; it certainly belongs not to ours. Accordingly never was there a legislator who did not institute magistrates with supreme authority; never a founder of an empire who did not feel how essential they were, to interpret the sense of the law, to apply it to all particular cases, to maintain the security of property, and persons, that is,

¹ St. Matth. xi. 25. Luke, x. 21.

to decide as a supreme tribunal upon objects as frivolous and transient as are their proprietors, upon interests of dust and dirt; and yet there are men who would have Jesus Christ, he who knows the heart and its folds, man and his silly passions, his restless curiosity, his rage for singularity, for pre-eminence, for making himself a name among creatures and followers; he who knows the ignorance and the incapacity of the multitude, and who notwithstanding has chosen to mix them together under the same law, and of all the people in the world to make but one nation of brethren; there are those, I say, who would have Jesus Christ to have been devoid of ordinary foresight in the Church of which he is King, in his plan of universal concord, on which the souls redeemed by his blood, and their happiness for time and eternity was at stake.¹

The reformation began by telling men; 'Take reason for the guide and the judge of your belief,' and thus at once men were dubbed logicians and theologians. Discord soon appeared among them, scattered divisions in their debates, and produced, with unceasing and inexhaustible fecundity, rival and jealous sects, who could agree in nothing but in doing their utmost to demolish one another, always attacking the youngest with increased fury, without perceiving that in their blind rivalry, the edifice must at last decay and crumble, and bury them all under its ruins. Before the reformation, and as long as the voice of the spiritual guides were followed, all was firm and compact: one and the same creed was common to all: one and the same doctrine was preached and heard through the vast empire of catholicity. Let good sense decide between these two conditions of mankind. Let us judge of the principles by their effects. The principle of Catholics is found by experience, to be the bond of peace and harmony: that of protestantism, the source of trouble and discord; the former unites mankind and would make of the world one family of brethren; the latter separates them, and would continue eternally to parcel out mankind into hostile parties.

¹ "Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." St. Paul, *1. Ep to Tim.* iv. 8.

The principle of authority, so analogous to our nature, is therefore also the only one in conformity with the will of the divine legislator, since he incontestably proposed to unite his adorers of all nations and all ages. You then, who have hitherto been so much taken with this liberty of discussing matters of faith, frankly acknowledge with us, that this liberty is demonstrated to be anti-christian, since instead of assembling together, it infallibly disperses.

Again, the reformation said at its commencement: 'Man is subject to error, and infallibility is the property of God alone.' So far we are agreed: and when we grant this prerogative to bishops united together, we are far from considering it inherent in their nature, which resembles our own: we derive it from heaven and from its promise. We take it as a favor, a pure gift, which Jesus Christ has condescended to bestow upon them for our advantage, in order that we may no longer be abandoned and fluctuating children, but may be conducted by a steady and paternal hand. As for you, who reject both the promises and gifts of your Saviour, you, whoever you be, reformers or reformed, Lutherans or Calvinists, Anglicans or Presbyterians, Methodists, Anabaptists or Socinians, you who acknowledge that the society of which you are members aspires not to this privilege from on high, you who acknowledge that it may err and draw you into error, how can you without inquietude continue and terminate in such a Church your mortal pilgrimage? How is it you are not afraid of all going fatally astray? How can you walk on with a safe conscience, when by your confession, your steps are not secure? Your whole society might go astray, you say: it is not then the church to which Christ has said the gates of hell shall never prevail against her.¹ Your society might go astray; it is not then the Church to which Christ gave the admirable and consoling assurance, 'Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.'² It might go astray; it is not then the Church to which is addressed the magnificent promise of its divine founder: 'I will ask the Father,

¹ Matth. xvi. 18. ² Ibid. xxviii. 20.

and he shall give you another paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever : who will teach you all truth.¹ It might go astray ; it is not then the *Church of the living God,*² *the pillar, and ground of the truth* ?³ It might go astray ! What then is become of those apostles, pastors, and teachers, who, by divine institution, shall always direct the Church, shall fix it in faith, that it may not be carried away by every wind of doctrine ? Acknowledge, Sir, that your ancestors are here visibly shewn, by their own principle, to be cut off from the body of Jesus Christ. They have renounced the promises and rejected the gifts he made to his followers ; they are no longer his : they have ceased to belong to him : and thus you are declared, by your own mouths, to be strangers to his Church, from the time that you have estranged yourselves from the privileges with which he has been pleased to invest it.

But attend to another consequence from the same principle, which will astonish you, and which, I confess, surprised me much, as soon as I discovered it. You remember all we have said in this and the preceding letters upon the authority of teaching in the governors, on the duty of submission in the governed, and on the enormity of heresy and schism. Now, Sir, with the glorious principle of the reform, all authority disappears in superiors, all obedience in the faithful : there is no longer such a thing as heresy or schism ; or, if you please, heresy and schism, which the scripture and all antiquity describe as the blackest of all crimes, are found from henceforth in the rank of lawful actions, quite harmless and innocent. In fact, when once you recognise no other rule of faith but the scripture, when once you grant to each one the right of interpreting it according to his own lights, it is most evident that I only use my right when I adopt that interpretation which appears to me the most reasonable. What ! you think it extravagant ! Be it so, to your heart's content ; you think so, and I do not oppose you : permit me also, together with yourself, to exercise my rights. Yes, but you run straight in the face of the doctrine generally received !

¹ St. John, xiv. 16. xiv. 13. ² *Ep. to Tim.* 3. 15. ³

Very well! What have I to do with the opinion of another? Speak not to me of authority; I am emancipated from it. Example is not my rule; reason is my only guide: and so long as I have no new lights upon such and such a question, I must hold to the opinion I have chosen. But, you will say again, this very choice and this perseverance in the choice, precisely constitute heresy. Indeed! then I will be a heretic; you will be one when you please; and all others in the same manner; there will no longer be any but heretics in the world, because all having equally the right to choose, each one will preserve the opinion that appears to him preferable. And more than this, if amongst all the Christian societies that exist, I find none of my opinion, I shall, in virtue of the same right, form a society apart; let those join in who please: if nobody fancies it, I shall remain alone, and my Church will be entire wherever I am myself.¹

Perhaps, in your eyes, I may appear to invent absurd hypothesis, for the purpose of laying unjust accusations against the reform. Not at all, Sir; and if you take the trouble to go back to its birth, or to consult the works of the most celebrated latitudinarians,² you will see that I only act the part of an historian. The first reformers and their emissaries, dispatched from all parts to propagate their doctrine; had flattered themselves that by filling the world with furious declamations against

¹ I remember to have read, somewhere, that a Mr. Johnson, an Englishman, had in his house, at Amsterdam, a Church composed of four individuals, and that it was soon divided and reduced to two, because the said Johnson excommunicated his father and brother, who on their part also excommunicated him.

² Among others, Strimesius, Belgius, and other professors, both of the University of Francfort on the Oder, and of the Academy of Dusburg in the Duchy of Cleves: Jurien and his partisans in Holland; Cartwright, Chillingworth, and Burnet, in England. Papin, who was a long time attached to their principles, ultimately became frightened at their consequences; he saw that they must absolutely open the Church to the Socinians, and even extend salvation out of Jesus Christ. He stopped at the brink of the abyss; and there, measuring all its terrific depth, and afterwards fixing his eyes upon the divine and infallible authority of the Church, he acknowledged it, humbled himself before it, and came to surrender himself up to Bossuet.

the pretended tyranny of the pope and the bishops, they would insensibly substitute themselves in their place, and would draw to themselves all the consideration and authority they would succeed in withdrawing from them. The illusion did not last long, and there was no necessity for waiting much to be convinced in what their noble experiments terminated. All those who had given into their ideas had set themselves to comment upon the scriptures, to search them, to compare passages, to reason upon the old and new testament: for they had been at great pains in preparing versions of them in different languages, each being seasoned to the taste of the translator, and according to the opinion that he wished to bring into repute.¹

The rage for controversy had then gained all states and conditions; the courtier and the magistrate, those engaged in the profession of arms, and those immersed in business; females even, particularly those, who prided themselves on their wit and learning, all must meddle with theology. The monk, tired of his cell, threw aside his habit, gained his liberty, and proceeded, like a good protestant, with edifying zeal to dictate to the successors of the apostles: the village schoolmaster did not think himself less clever than the new ministers. In vain did these latter remonstrate against such presumption: very soon they listened no more to them: no one understood how to obey: all claimed their rights, their independence, and that liberty of the

¹ Luther made a version of the scripture into the vulgar language.* Zuinglius after having examined it, publicly announced that it corrupted the word of God. The Lutherans said the same of the version of Zuinglius. Ecolampadius and the theologians of Bâle, made another version: but, according to the famous Beza, it was impious in many parts; the divines of Bâle said the same of Beza's version. In fact, adds Dumoulin, another learned minister, he changes in it the text of scripture; and speaking of Calvin's translation, he says, that Calvin does violence to the letter of the gospel, which he has changed, making also additions of his own. The ministers of Geneva believed themselves obliged to make an exact version, but James I. King of England, declared in the conference at Hampton Court, that of all the versions it was the most wicked and the most unfaithful.

* The learned Emser, doctor of Leipsick, discovered in it more than a thousand errors.

children of God, that had been so much extolled to them from the beginning. Thus the arms with which the ministers had overturned the legitimate authority of their superiors, were turned against themselves. They had advanced from liberty to licentiousness and anarchy, each one pulling his own way, shaping the Church to his fancy, inventing and forging doctrines according to his inclination. 'The authority of the ministers is entirely abolished; all is lost, all is going to ruin. There is no Church among us, not even a single one, in which there is discipline.....; the people tell us boldly; You wish to act the part of tyrants in a Church that is free; you wish to establish a new papacy.'¹ God gives me to know what it is to be a pastor, and the wrong we have done to the Church by the precipitate judgment and inconsiderate vehemence that has induced us to reject the pope. For the people accustomed, and as it were trained to licentiousness, have entirely thrown off the rein; they cry out to us: I know the gospel well enough; what need have I of your assistance to find Jesus Christ? Go, and preach to those who are willing to hear you.'² Bucer, Capito's colleague at Strasburg, made the same confession, in 1549, and added, that in embracing the reformation they had sought for nothing so much, 'as the pleasure of living in it according to their inclination.'³ Myco, the successor of Œcolampadius in the ministry at Bâle, indulges in the same complaints: 'The laics attribute every thing to themselves, and the magistrate has created himself into a pope.'⁴ And the peaceable and unfortunatè Melancton, who spent half his life in lamenting the part in which he had been engaged, and died without having sufficient courage to abandon it; 'The Elbe, (wrote he in confidence to a friend,)⁵ the Elbe with all its waves could not furnish tears enough to weep over the miseries of the distracted reformation.' 'You see the violence of the multitude and its blind desires,' wrote he again to his friend Camerarius.

So much excess, so many crimes, which were daily committed in the reform, at last opened the eyes of the leaders upon the

¹ Capito, Bucer's colleague at Strasburgh, writing to his friend Farrell. ² *Int.* *Ep. Calv.* p. 5. ³ *Ibid.* p. 509, 510. ⁴ *Ibid.* p. 52. ⁵ *Lib.* II. ep. 202.

principles which they had at first put forward, and made them understand that they must change both their method and their language. Blinded creatures! not to have known sooner, that to destroy, there is nothing more required than that enthusiasm and intoxication to which the multitude is so prone; whereas when they wish to rebuild, they know not in what manner to bring back to order and subordination the minds that have been once infatuated with their religious independence! However that may be, the reformers employed for this purpose all the resources of their mind, the credit they enjoyed with princes, and the little control they still retained over the people. See with what ardor poor Melancthon set himself about it: 'Would to God, would to God, said he, that I might be able, not indeed to conform the domination of the bishops, but to re-establish their administration! for I see what kind of a Church we are going to have, if we overturn the ecclesiastical government. I see that tyranny will be more insupportable than ever..... What will be the condition of the Church (continues he) if we change all the ancient customs and there be no longer any fixed prelates and conductors?'¹

'Our brethren blame me because I give jurisdiction to the bishops. The people accustomed to liberty after having once shaken off the yoke, are unwilling to receive it any more, and it is the towns of the empire that hate this dominion the most. They do not trouble themselves about doctrine and religion, but only about power and liberty.'²

Some time after this, it appears that the ministers and the principal persons of the party struck in with his opinion: for instead of saying, our brethren blame me, he says now: 'Our brethren are agreed that the ecclesiastical mode of government by which bishops are recognised as the superiors of many Churches, and the bishop of Rome superior over all the bishops, is permitted. It has also been permitted to kings to give revenues to the Churches: so there is no dispute about the superiority of the pope and the authority of the bishops; and the pope as

¹ Book III. ep. 104. ² Book I. ep. 17, addressed to Luther.

well as the bishops may easily preserve this authority. For the Church stands in need of conductors to maintain order, to have an eye over those who are called to the ecclesiastical ministry and over the doctrine taught by the priests, and to exercise ecclesiastical judgments: so that, if there were no bishops, we must needs make them. The monarchy of the pope would also tend very much to preserve agreement in doctrine among many nations. Thus we should easily agree upon the superiority of the pope, if we were agreed upon all the rest, and kings might themselves easily check the encroachments of the pope upon the temporalities of their kingdom.¹ What reflections do this passage, and many others which I could produce, occasion on the irresistible force of experience and truth, which oblige men to recognise the principles which they themselves had overturned. Melancthon is not the only one who entertained these opinions in these times. You will have remarked this declaration; ‘Our brethren are agreed.’ In the confession of Augsburgh, they had already proclaimed tolerably loudly the authority of the Church, of the Catholic Church, and even the doctrine of the Church of Rome. I have given you the passages above. As for the Calvinists, without retracing here the multitude of professions of faith, and of synods, the object of which evidently was to instruct and to hold people’s minds in subjection, by the voice of authority, I shall notice some sentences of the synod of Delpht, because they have more closely imitated the language of the Catholic Church, and almost adopted the same doctrine.

The remonstrants had advanced that the synod with which they were threatened would not be infallible like the apostles. It was not easy for the Calvinists openly to deny this; the synod of Delpht, however, answered them in these words: ‘Jesus Christ who promised to his apostles the Spirit of truth, whose lights should conduct them in all truth, also promised to his Church to be with her to the end of ages and where two or three are assembled together in his name there to be in the midst of them;’ from which they conclude, a little later, ‘that when pas-

tors from several countries should be assembled, to decide according to the word of God, what must be taught in the Churches, we must, with a firm confidence, be persuaded that Jesus Christ would be with them according to his promise.' Now the declaration of this provincial synod (and this should be observed) was afterwards read and approved at the national synod of Dordrecht, called by all the party the almost œcumenical synod, because, in fact, in it were found deputies from England, Scotland, the Palatinate, Hesse, Switzerland, Geneva, Bremen, Emdén, in a word, from the whole body of the reformation, not joined to the Lutherans, with the exception of the French, whom reasons of state kept away, but who approved of it afterwards. We see here the whole of Calvinism brought back in its turn to the principle of authority, as was Lutheranism before it, in the confession of Augsburgh.

The particular teachers who have since appeared, and who have shewn more learning and moderation, in both parties, have adopted the same principles and held nearly the same language. I do not even entirely except M. Jurieu, whom I could cite to you, were it not of more consequence to make you acquainted with a more grave and more solidly instructed personage M. Molanus, the Abbé de Lokkum, the friend and fellow-laborer of Leibnitz, in the project of conciliation carried on for some time, between them and Bossuet, but which unfortunately failed. M. Molanus assigns as the third rule of faith the interpretation of the scripture adopted by common consent or authorized by the practice of the ancient and modern Church,—or which should be approved by a general council held legitimately and freely. All Christians are agreed (says he) upon the following points: 1st, such or such councils are not always necessary of themselves, but only on account of certain circumstances, as when the troubles of the Church cannot otherwise be appeased.' 2dly. 'It is agreed that the interpretation of scripture given by the council should be preferred, at least exteriorly, to that of any individual: on this account the confession of Augsburgh declares that a general council is the ultimate means employed by antiquity

to procure the peace of the Church, and ought to be resorted to. The synod of Dordrecht, all the councils held by the two parties, and even that of the apostles, confirm the same thing. In fine, we find still another decided confirmation in the acts of the synod of Charenton, where it is said, that if it were permitted to all and to each one to adhere to private interpretations, there would be as many religions as parishes. 3rdly. Again, it is agreed, that the œcumenical councils have very often erred,¹ and that when we attribute to them the assistance of the Holy Spirit, or that infallibility to which all Christians owe an inward submission, we have never pretended that such infallibility belongs to them, precisely because they are councils, but because of the subsequent consent of the greatest part of the Church, to which the assistance of the Holy Spirit is promised.' And in the new explanation of his method he says: 'If the Church had decided in a council undoubtedly general, such as are, by the consent of all parties, the first of Nice, the three of Constantinople, that of Chalcedon and that of Ephesus, the contrary to that which the protestants decide, there is no doubt that this decision should carry the day.'² You have here then, according to the learned Abbé and according to M. Leibnitz, for they both labored together, the authority of the Church brought into honor and repute: and according to them and the acts of Charenton, it is not lawful for any one to adopt his private interpretations, because otherwise there would be as many religions as parishes: the œcumenical council should supersede all others; infallibility is attached to the greatest part of the Church, because the assistance of the Holy Spirit has been promised it. Do we require more? Or did we ask more in the time of Luther and Calvin? Who would not feel himself vehemently moved with compassion at the sight of the fatal schism, that has been effected by means of crying down an authority, to which the reformers were one day to have recourse again? O the blindness and folly of man!

¹I know not who can allow that the general councils have erred: certainly M. Molanus cannot do it, for he teaches the opposite in this very passage. ²Ibid. 322.

Oh! the misery of your guilty reformers and their numerous descendants!

But I am detaining you too long in a strange country: I hasten to conduct you again to your fellow-countrymen. From the time that England, which perhaps may claim the glory of superior knowledge in its temporal interests, and of excelling in the art of governing, had taken the fatal resolution to legalize schism and to form itself into a religious constitution, it felt the necessity of investing its new Church with all the strength and power of the nation. One of the first concerns of the parliament was to carry a law for the establishing of uniformity of worship. The supreme governess acted upon the same plan. No sooner had she substituted her bishops for those of the ancient Church, but she gave them to understand that they must assemble and draw up a formula of faith, that might serve as a basis of the common creed of her subjects. They actually assembled in 1562, and drew up the thirty-nine articles, which afterwards received the approbation of parliament. But what influence could the governess of the parliament have over the mind, after they had taught the people to despise the holy authority that Jesus Christ had given to his Church? And, above all, what did the new spiritual lords mean by their twentieth article? With what face did they there claim for themselves the right of judging controversies, deciding upon matters of faith, of enforcing obedience to their decisions by all their spiritual censures, they, who but late had prided themselves on their abjuring the authority of the universal Church, and had just made so shameful a display of insubordination against their legitimate superiors? How come they, now a-days, to entertain so high an idea of the episcopal dignity and authority, much misplaced undoubtedly in their persons, and yet essentially most Christian? There are then certain powerful truths with which men find themselves penetrated and as it were impregnated in spite of themselves; to which they are constrained to pay homage, when their interests hold their peace. For then they lay down their principles in theory, as if they no longer remembered having combated them

the day before in their actions. To conclude, all that they gain is to give a more scandalous display to the contradiction with which they were reproached between their actual doctrine and their public conduct. Who are you? Said they to them: whence come you? Yesterday we knew nothing of you? Whose place do you occupy? It is the place of your masters in the faith, of your superiors, to whom the right of holding their sees still belongs, unless sheer violence makes them lose it. You have despised authority in them, and would you have it recognised in you? They at least held it from the universal Church, with which they were in communion: they formed a part of the apostolic chain of succession; but have not you by breaking his communion, broken also the chain? Have you not gone out of the regular line? Intruders into these ancient sees, your authority comes from yourselves.¹ You have no existence, no power, except from your royal governess; you are her creatures as she is the creature of parliament; your authority comes from her; her's from it. Join together, as long as you please, in framing rules of policy, among you and yours. So far, so good. But do not pretend to subjugate our opinions: they are free, you know

“*Ut fieri solet in ædificio lapso, ut qui illud restaurare cupit, in veteri fundamento non ædificet, quia convulsum est et minus firmum, et plenum rudrum, sed novum aliquod fundamentum ponit: ita in restauratione ecclesiæ factum est. Voluit enim Deus non in veteri fundamento, hoc est, in successione episcoporum, sed novo quodam et extraordinario modo illam instaurationem fieri.*”

“*Nostri episcopi et ministri non sunt a papisticis episcopis ordinati.*”*

It is a principle that he who withdraws himself from the authority of the Church, loses by that act all the jurisdiction he had received from it: and there no longer remains any jurisdiction for him to communicate. Thus the bishops who were *not papistical*, of whom Whitaker speaks, supposing even they had enjoyed the right of conferring it before their defection, would not have been able to transmit any after. Cardinal Pole was then the last archbishop of Canterbury in the apostolic succession, and Parker the first in the parliamentary and royal establishment.

And should the consecration of Parker have been valid (and this even, according to Le Courayer, is at least doubtful, to speak of it in the most favorable manner possible) it is certain that the jurisdiction of the Church could never have been communicated to him.

* Dr. Whitaker, lector reg. Cantabr. *Controv.* II. q. V. c. vi. Died in 1595.

they are, you have taught us so, and without this, you would not be where you are.' The dispute has continued since and still exists between the partisans of the established Church, and the numerous sects, who wish for none. The first, agreeably with the institution of the divine Legislator, judge with reason that without authority there can be no unity in the Church: the others, agreeably with the principles of the reformation, and much more consistently, are of opinion, that if they must submit to a spiritual authority, there was no necessity for beginning by emancipating themselves from it, and that, all things considered, it would have been better to have kept to that, which derived its origin from God himself. It is certain that the doctrine of the twentieth article is unwarrantable on the principle of the reformation, in England as well as upon the Continent.¹ There was no other means of establishing it than by returning to the Catholic principle. It would have been necessary that the first reformers, instructed by experience, should frankly have acknowledged their mistake, have loudly declared that they had gone astray, and that neither order, nor unity, nor salvation could be expected, unless under the protection of an infallible authority. A candid and spiritual acknowledgment like this would have been too heroic to have been expected from the very persons who had raised the standard of revolt. But you who come so long behind them; you, who without partaking in their aggression, equally share in their errors, and the fatal consequences, of which they were the first witnesses, and which they so much deplored towards the end of their career, what prevents you from surrendering yourself to the clearness of the proofs, the force of truth, and the the lesson read by experience? Never lose sight of the day when the reformation took its rise in your country and elsewhere, and say; The Church and its authority were then as before, as they are to day, and as they will be for ever, solidly

¹ See among others, *Lord Sommers' Tracts*, vol. II. p. 460, where you will find an anonymus work, the author of which expresses himself in a strong and virulent manner, against the twentieth article, and against bishop Sparrow, the publisher of the thirty-nine articles and the canons.

established upon the promises of Jesus Christ; this foundation is not less firm and immoveable than that of the universe, for the finger of God supports them both alike, and promises to them the same duration.

‘Yes, Sir, will you say to me, I see with you and our reformers the evils that have come from their principles: in spite of myself I must acknowledge that men have abused to their ruin the rights that had at first been given to them; I am struck also with what you have said to me on the infallibility of the Church: your proofs embarrass me; I know not what reply to make: nevertheless, Sir, excuse my boldness; I am an Englishman; I love and adore liberty. Your principles of authority destroy it. They are adapted for nothing but to make slaves, and a slave I can never become.’

I was expecting to see you fly to this strong entrenchment and your last refuge, Sir; I am aware of the sentiments of your countrymen and their ideas of liberty; ideas which they carry even into the sanctuary. I remember that during my residence in London, even one of your bishops (Dr. Hoarsley, if my memory serves me faithfully) published a work in which he pushed to excess this objection against the Catholic principles. I read the work at the time, and was scandalized, not to say indignant. How, said I to myself, how can a man endowed with reason and great talents persuade himself that he is made a slave of, because it is proposed to him to submit his private and individual opinion to the uniform opinion of all the bishops of the earth? Liberty then, according to him, would be for each individual to prefer his own self to the highest authority of the world. But is it not the height of pride and the last degree of extravagance? ‘Not to submit to such an authority, would be the height of pride and the blindest arrogance. What more manifest proof can there be of our ingratitude to God, than to place our glory and exert our efforts in opposing an authority, which he created to be an aid and assistance to us?’¹

¹ St. Augustine to his friend Honoratus on the *Utility of believing the Church*. xvii.

But, Sir, because upon the single fact of revealed dogmas you are required to follow the decisions of antiquity, of all the councils universally adopted, will you on that account consider yourself as degraded from your liberty and treated like a slave? Were they slaves in Italy, in Germany, in France, Spain and England, where so many celebrated universities flourished, where so many great men have appeared in every state of life and every branch of science. To produce only one, but he the first of all, Bossuet, was he in your opinion a slave, he whose vast genius embraced so many sciences and treated them like a master, he whose inimitable and supreme excellence subdued all the enemies against whom he fought, made so many conquests to truth, and erected so many immortal trophies to religion? But, you will say, as far as relates to dogmas at least, Bossuet was a slave, since he teaches so boldly that when the Church has spoken, we have only to believe and be silent.

One moment, Sir, I pray. I may perhaps have something to say to you, which will produce a salutary confusion at your notion, and banish it for ever from your mind. Tell me, if you please, should Jesus Christ re-appear upon earth, or rather if you had had the happiness of seeing him and hearing his instructions, would you have refused him obedience? Would you have considered yourself a slave because he commanded you to believe in his word? You say nothing. Well then! the authority to which you are at the present day to subject yourself, is still the authority of Christ. It is not the voice of man, that you obey by hearing the Church; but that of Jesus Christ. He has spoken by his apostles; as all Christianity agrees. He has spoken by his successors, and even as far as the fifth age, protestants are all agreed upon this. He continues to speak and will speak to the end of the world, by their means; this is demonstrated; he himself has said it, promised it, and often repeated his assurance of it: for this you have heard all the proofs.¹

¹ "I will say more: I declare to you that, if I were born a Catholic I would remain a good Catholic, knowing well that your Church puts a very salutary restraint upon the wanderings of human reason, which finds neither bottom nor

Throw them aside your low ideas of servitude, and feel yourself much more ennobled under the yoke that your divine Redeemer has with his own hand placed upon you, and upon the whole human race without exception.

shore, when it attempts to sound the abyss of things: and I am so convinced of the utility of this restraint, that I have imposed upon myself a similar one, by prescribing to myself for the remainder of my life, some rules of faith, from which I do not allow myself to depart." (J. J. Rousseau, in his answer to M. Seguir de Saint-Brisson, dated Moitiers, July 22, 1764.) A very remarkable acknowledgement, forced by experience and reflection from a man, of all others, the most proud of his reason and liberty of thinking.

LETTER IV.

On the Authority of Tradition.

At the same time that reformers were pretending an absolute deference and an exclusive submission to the Holy Scripture, they united all their hatred and all their attacks against the infallibility of the Church. This disposition ought not to surprise you, Sir; the reason of it you will easily discover. It is not without reason that they fear an impartial and inflexible judge, whose eye is always open and cannot be escaped, and whose sentence is unchangeable; there is no imposing upon a supreme tribunal, the office of which is to maintain the law in its integrity, to call to it those who are gone astray, to explain it to those who misunderstand it, to rectify all their errors, by giving to the text its just and true signification; a tribunal armed moreover with a sacred authority to condemn, and proscribe the refractory and contumacious. The only means of escaping from its condemnation and anathemas, was to dispute its title of divine authority, and to annihilate, had it been possible, its jurisdiction. The authors of the reformation saw full well, that they had no other plan to adopt: they adopted it, and employed all their efforts to bring it to bear: they flattered themselves they should succeed by substituting for the judgment of the Bishops, the authority of the word of God, so religiously revered by all the faithful, so imposing to Christian ears: and as they reserved to themselves the right of interpreting it, there remained nothing more to be feared in their appeal from the Church to the scripture, that is to say, to an insensible and passive letter, which signifies whatever we please, and bears ever, the most opposite interpretation without objection or reply, because it is dumb: which suffers violence and is put to the torture, and utters no complaint, because it is dead.¹ They established, then, for their

¹“Speech is to writing what a man is to his portrait. The productions of writing present themselves to our eyes as if living; but if we interrogate them,

first maxim, that the judge of faith was not the Church, but the Holy Scripture. I am going to examine this principle with you: and if the arguments I have to oppose to it are not much weakened by my pen, you will, I think, have to conclude that it was absolutely untenable in itself and in its consequences.

For the second maxim, they taught that every thing essential in religion was in the scripture, and certainly, if the scripture was the sole rule of faith, the whole system of faith must be found there entire. The inference is logical but no less false in itself than the principle from which it is derived. And this we shall shortly prove.

But previously it may be observed and collected from each of these principles, how little the first ages were then understood. The reformers were always boasting of the purity of those times, and with good reason: they were desirous, as they said, to reproduce this golden age of Christianity, and the renovated world was again to behold the restoration of the primitive Church which they always contrasted with the Church of Rome. They acted upon these three following suppositions: 1st, That antiquity had possessed no other rule of life but the holy scripture: 2ndly, that it had never believed or practised any dogmas or precepts but what were found therein: 3rdly, that those which are not discovered therein had been added to the simplicity of faith and worship, in what they called the times of ignorance and corruption: whence they concluded that by retrenching these superfluous additions, which they also pronounced to be super-

they hold a dignified silence. It is the same with scripture, which knows neither what it should conceal from one man, nor what it should say to another. If it is attacked or insulted without cause, it cannot defend itself; for its father is never there to defend it; so that he who imagines that he can establish by scripture alone, a clear and durable doctrine, is a great simpleton." (Plat. in Phœdr. Op. t. X. edit. Bipont. p. 382.) Glory to the truth! (exclaims upon this the eloquent Comte de Maistre) "if the *Word* eternally living does not vivify the scripture, never will the scripture become the *Word*, that is to say, *Life*. Let others then, as long as they please, call upon the *dumb word*, we shall laugh in security at this *false good*, always waiting with a tender impatience for the moment in which its deluded votaries shall cast themselves into our arms, open to receive them now for nearly three hundred years."

stitious and idolatrous, and by following what they supposed to be the rule of antiquity,¹ they should infallibly tally with it, and thus bring back the Church to its primitive purity. Such was the visionary proposal made by them on their appearance in the world: in their sincerity and simplicity, if you please, but more probably, in their ignorance of the first ages. For you have already seen, with regard to the first point, Sir, that antiquity has laid the rule of faith in the doctrine of the bishops, according to the ordinance of Jesus Christ and the instructions of the apostles: on the third, you shall see clearly in the course of this examination that the articles, treated as posterior additions, belong to the primitive times: on the second, I am about to shew you that, far from thinking that the dogmas and precepts were exclusively contained in scripture, antiquity teaches us after the scripture itself, that many articles are derived to us from the apostles by a purely oral tradition.

The clergy of Elizabeth, in unison with the innovators of the continent, and like them in opposition to the sacred books and antiquity, declared accordingly, that ‘the holy scripture contain-

¹ In 1528, at the dispute at Berne, at which were present Zuinglius, Pellican, Bucer, Bullinger, Ecolampadius, and Capto, the second of the six theses asserted: “The Church of Christ does not make ordinances and laws without the word of God.”* And here they were only treating of those laws which regard salvation and bind conscience, according to the explanation given to the theses by Kolb, in the name of the reformed.—Bucer, replying to a Catholic, asserts ‘that it had been already proved, that the true Church makes no regulation which is not clearly established in scripture.’†

In 1536, in the disputation at Lausanne, Virel said, ‘that it was not sufficient to say: I have found it written (in the Fathers), but we must keep to the scripture: *and this it is that makes the Church of the Lord.*’‡ ‘The holy fathers, declared Jewel in the name of the Church of England have never combated heretics except by the arms of the scripture.’‡ ‘And thus, he tells us (a little later), when we desired to restore the Church to its primitive purity and integrity, we did not attempt to build upon any other foundation than the one laid by the apostles and Jesus Christ: after having attended to what he himself has said to us, after having considered the example of the primitive Church, we proceeded, &c.’||

* *Histoire de la reforme de la Suisse*, par Ruchat, professeur de belles lettres a Lausanne, tom. ii. p. 95. edit. de Geneve, 1727. † *Ibid.* tom. vi. p. 34, 35. ‡ *Apolog*, i. no. 15. || *Ibid.* vi. no. 16, 17.

eth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, or can not be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.¹ But without going any further, shew us, my Lords, the validity of your baptism; by scripture alone. Jesus Christ there ordains that it shall be conferred, not by pouring water on the heads of the believers, but by the believers plunging into water. The word βαπτίζω employed by the Evangelists, strictly conveys this signification as the learned are agreed, and at the head of them, Casaubon, of all the Calvinists, the best versed in the Greek language. Now baptism by immersion has ceased for many ages, and you yourselves, as well as we have, only received it by infusion: it would therefore be all up with your baptism, unless you established the validity of it by tradition and the practice of the Church. And again, we see from scripture that Jesus Christ commanded his apostles and their successors to preach and baptize; but we do not read any where that he communicated this right to heretics, whom he treated as pagans. This being settled. I ask you, from whom have you received baptism? Is it not from the Church of Rome? And what do you think of her? Do you not consider her as heretical and even idolatrous? You cannot then, according to the terms of scripture, prove the validity of your baptism; and to produce a proof for it, you are obliged to seek it, with Pope Stephen and the councils of Arles and Nice, in apostolical tradition.

You recognize with us the precept of sanctifying the Sunday, and considering the care with which you inculcate it to your people and the wise regulations of government that concur with your instructions to confirm it in their minds,² I cannot doubt that you regard this precept as necessary to salvation. Never-

¹ Article 6.

² For the honor of the English government and for the shame of Catholic countries, I am bound to publish, that the Sunday is observed in England with an exterior regularity, which we unfortunately, are far from equalling. On this day, especially consecrated to God, the laws and customs allow no public assemblies, out of the churches and temples; no balls, no routs, no masquerades, no

theless, it must be allowed, scripture is absolutely silent upon this precept: we every where read Sabbath (Saturday): and no where Sunday. And here again, the third time, are you obliged, in an essential matter to support yourselves with us upon tradition, which shews us, from time immemorial, the Sunday as substituted for the Sabbath or Saturday, in order to celebrate on one and the same day the two great prodigies of the ancient and modern eras, the universe coming forth from nothing, and Jesus Christ from his tomb.

In order to discard tradition, you tell us, my Lords, that the scripture contains everything that is necessary to salvation. A strange and fantastical doctrine! and such I cannot but call it, seeing that you are most positively indebted to tradition for the scriptures, that you receive them from its hands, and that without it, you would not know to what to betake yourselves to demonstrate their authenticity: for we do not prove that a book is written by such an apostle or such an Evangelist, except that it has been received and read as such in the Churches. But supposing that to please you for a moment, we must admit your sixth article. I cheerfully consent to do so, and at the same time we will open these inspired writings. What do we read there? 'Now I praise you brethren that you keep my ordinances

Renelagh, no Vauxhall; all theatrical amusements are forbidden. In London, where commerce is so prodigiously carried on, the public conveyances remain at rest, the course of letters is suspended, the post does not receive them, although it is permitted to them in the evening to make their way to their destination: throughout the whole kingdom, stage wagons employed in trade or commerce stop on the high roads. I know not whether an act passed upon a Sunday would not be annulled by its very date alone. Certain, however, it is, that the civil power is obliged to suspend its pursuits, and concede to the debtor the right of appearing freely on the day of the Lord. On this day, moreover, the parliament is closed, in spite of the urgency of affairs, and I have often seen it respectfully interrupt its sessions at the approach of great solemnities. It must be confessed that there is in these laws a tone of wisdom and gravity that makes an impression on the mind.

English persons of distinction have often testified to me their astonishment at not finding in Catholic countries the same respect for the Sunday. They have declared to me that they had been much scandalized on the subject, and certainly they had but too much reason to be so.

as I have delivered them to you.¹ Stand fast (mark this well I pray you) and hold the traditions which you have learned, *whether* by word *or* by our epistle.² Now let us look again at your article. What would the apostles say to it? He desires that they hold equally fast what he had taught them, whether by writing or by word of mouth. And what is it you desire, my lords? Nothing but what is written. That is sufficient. I go on reading: 'O Timothy keep that which is committed to thy trust.'³ Hold the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in faith, and in the love which is in Christ Jesus. Keep the good thing committed to thy trust by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in us.⁴ And the things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others.'⁵ Apparently you doubt not, my lords, that Timothy followed this direction, and that faithful and fit men being instructed by him, instructed others in their turn. Thus from hand to hand, from age to age, the deposit is come down to you. And all at once you refuse to accept it; you refuse to transmit it, you interrupt, you break the traditional and apostolic chain; and, under pretext of holding to scripture alone, you disregard its repeated and most evident injunctions. Honestly confess, my lords, you did not think, by throwing aside tradition, that you would become embarrassed in contradictions both with yourselves and with the Holy Scripture. We as well as you, receive it, we venerate it, as the most noble present that God has made to man; do you also honor in the same manner with us his unwritten word, since it comes not the less from Him. Change your article: let us stand fast together, according to the precept of the apostle, and retain all that has been taught, whether by word of mouth, or by writing.

I return to you, Sir, and I entreat you to weigh the observations I have yet to make to you on this important matter. They are suggested to us by the example of the apostles and their successors, during the illustrious ages of the Church. 1st. We

¹ I Tim. vi. 20. ² II Tim. i, 13, 14. ³ Ibid. xi. 2. ⁴ I Cor. xi. ⁵ II Thes. xi. 14.

often see that Jesus Christ commands his apostles to preach his gospel and carry it to all nations. 'Go (said he to them) teach all nations whatever I have commanded you.' We nowhere find that he said to them: Go; *write* for all nations what I command you to believe and practice; and let them always have in their hands under their eyes the most exact detail of their faith drawn out by your pen. We behold the apostles and the disciples, after having received the Holy Spirit, traversing the whole of Judea, announcing to their countrymen the kingdom of God: every thing is done by exhortations, by instructions and prayers. If they had intended to give to the world, and to leave after them a complete code of revealed laws, it would seem natural that they should have drawn out this code, before their separation. Let us observe them therefore at the moment, when, dividing the world among them to accelerate its conquest, they are on the point of leaving Jerusalem and Judea, and of proceeding, each his way, to their particular destination. They separate, and carry with them no writing, no body of doctrine drawn up by common agreement. They all, however, carry the same gospel, but in their minds and hearts; they traverse cities, provinces, kingdoms, and do not present themselves to the nations with the sacred books in their hands: they preach from their inspired mouths the evangelical doctrine, but never produce it in writing. To see them and follow them, they seem not even to think of any means of instructing men by the eyes. They are totally occupied with preaching and not with writing: with engraving the word, not upon the lips, but on the souls of men. Many years had already passed, and no work had as yet appeared from their pen.¹ You will remark that out of twelve apostles, two only have left us a gospel, and even St. John at a very advanced age, at Ephesus, under the Emperor Nerva, in the year 96. If you examine the occasions which induced them to write, you will find that particular and local circumstances gave

¹ We must except the gospel of St. Matthew: for we learn from St. Chrysostom* that eight years after the ascension of our Saviour, at the time when he

* On St. Matthew.

birth to these writings, as well as to all those that compose the New Testament. We owe the gospel of St. Mark to the fervor and eagerness of the Christians at Rome. Eusebius tells us upon the testimony of Clement of Alexandria,¹ that 'the hearers of St. Peter besought Mark, his disciple, to put in writing the doctrine of the Saviour. He did so; and Peter, inspired from above, examined this work, approved it, confirmed it with his authority, and ordered that it should be read in the Churches.' St. Luke commences by informing us of the motive that induced him to write. Ignorant and rude men, hurried on by a blind and culpable zeal had attempted of their own heads to relate the words and actions of our Saviour: their writings were spreading among the Christians under the false titles of the gospels according to Peter, Thomas, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthias, the twelve apostles, &c. It was of consequence that these miserable rhapsodies, should be put down. St. Paul exhorted his disciples to publish an exact narrative, and Luke executed it under the eye of his master, in Achaia and Bœotia, according to St. Jerome, in the year 58, the second of Nero. As for St. John, it was to refute the heresies of Cerinthus and the Ebionites that taking his lofty flight beyond the bounds of time, he shews us Jesus Christ in the bosom of the divinity, the Son of God. God himself, and then re-descends with him upon earth, to relate to us his incarnation, his life and ministry among men.

The epistles, for the most part, are either answers to consultations, or instructions to Churches especially mentioned, or even to individuals. Called forth by local circumstances, but always dictated by the Holy Spirit, they appear successively at different epochs, at distant periods of time: adapted to the circumstances of the place, of the persons and sometimes of the moment, they treat of particular and relative subjects, although at the same time they contain advice, lessons and precepts that are applicable to Christians in general. But this does not authorize us to an-

was going to preach to the Gentiles, St. Matthew, at the solicitation of the Jews, sketched out, in their language, a History of Jesus Christ and his revelation.

¹ Hist. Eccles. Lib. II. xiv.

nounce, or suppose in the sacred writer, much less in the college of the apostles, a settled resolution, a premeditated design of drawing out for us a complete body of doctrine. It is true that all these writings were received with a singular avidity by the faithful to whom they were addressed; true also that they were communicated one after another with a holy eagerness, and that, from the day on which they were first known to the moment I am addressing you, they have been read in all religious assemblies, in all the Churches of the world, and that this will be done perpetually to the end of time. It is true, that in them the doctrine of the apostles was recognised, their word tasted, their preaching discovered, and that though absent they seemed still to be heard. It is true, that the first Christians must have admired the agreement and resemblance of what they read with what they had heard. Yet nevertheless they could not but remark that all that they had heard was not there; they could not therefore, in receiving these works as the sacred deposit of the divine word, regard them as the sole and only deposit of this word. In fact, did the apostle ever signify that, for belief and practice we must confine ourselves to what they were waiting? Did they ever signify, that they had entrusted to writing all that they had preached by word of mouth, or even all that was necessary for salvation? There is not an expression of the kind in the whole of the New Testament. It comes from your reformers, who have drawn it from their brain or borrowed it from the ancient heresies, but not from the Holy Scripture, whatever protestation they all may perpetually be making, that they teach nothing but what is there. Let them shew you then this principle, since they admit it and wish you to admit it: let them shew it to you in the sacred volume. But how could they do it, when the contrary principle is found therein contained in so many words. For you have seen St. Paul frequently referring to the instructions he had given by word of mouth; you have heard him positively distinguishing between his verbal and epistolary instructions and prescribing that both the one and the other must be equally observed. Up to the time of your forefathers in 1562, this order had been ob-

served in England as well as upon the Continent, until the day when the Reformation shewed its head. At this epoch, so fatal to your country and my own, the precept of St. Paul was solemnly transgressed for the first time, and for the first time it was said: In what pertains to salvation, there is nothing but what is written. But the first Christians who passed many years without the scriptures, who received them successively one after another, and waited for the Gospel of St. John till the year 96: but those barbarous and yet most religious people who had not even then any Scripture when St. Irenæus wrote of them towards the end of the second age, they would not have known either what they ought to believe, or what they ought to practice; they would have been without resource for salvation—they who labored for it to an extent and with an energy of faith to which we shall never attain! The reformation must here maintain at least that the means which they then possessed of knowing the law, and which sufficed for them, became absolutely useless as soon as heaven chose to add a second, and that the word reduced to legible characters stripped the word that was not so, of the merit and value it had hitherto enjoyed in the Christian world. I have been proving to you, Sir, that this notion is no ways in accordance with the conduct and doctrine of the apostles; you shall now see that it accords no better with the conduct and doctrine of their successors, and that antiquity was never acquainted with any such opinion.

2ndly, I will suppose that the reformed Church has to pronounce upon a question of faith. How is it to set about approving or condemning the doctrine submitted to its decisions? It knows nothing but the Scripture; all that relates to salvation is to be found there; nothing can be required that is not read there in full, or that cannot be drawn from it by a sound and lawful inference. It would not and could not therefore have any thing but the Scriptures to consult. But this was not the way of proceeding that antiquity followed. It examined not only the Scriptures, but also what was believed and taught by the Churches, above all by the apostolic Churches, and what the most

celebrated Fathers had signified in their works; its examination was directed both to the holy Scripture and the doctrine of Tradition, to the written and unwritten word of God. We will, if you please, produce an example, the most illustrious to be found, and which will dispense with our accumulating here a multitude of facts. The great council of Nice had to pronounce upon Arius, who was pretending to justify his doctrine by Scripture. We learn from the historians of the time, in what manner it proceeded in its examination: 'The bishops.....opposed to the false subtilities of the Arians the great truths of Scripture, and the ancient belief of the Church, from the apostles till then.'¹ 'After having a long time, *maturely* and *fully* considered this adorable subject, it appeared to all our bishops together, that the consubstantiality was to be defined as of faith, in the same manner as this faith had been transmitted by our fathers, after the apostles.'² You see here a fundamental question solemnly decided according to both authorities, according to Scripture upon which Arius placed his reliance, and according to the tradition of the holy Fathers, conformably with which the decision was carried. The single fact of itself crumbles to ruins the principle of the Reformation, and shows how far it has wandered from the ancient way.

But I will now adduce something else, quite of a different character but equally powerful for my purpose; another question of importance, celebrated for its antagonists, who were, on the one side the head of the Church, on the other, the primate of Africa; and which after having agitated and divided the Church for nearly a century, was definitively decided without any possible recurrence to Scripture, *by tradition alone*, in this same general council. I am alluding to the question of re-baptization. In vain would they search the Scripture for the manner in which heretics were to be received into the Church: whether they must be admitted with the baptism they had received out of the Church, or whether it must be again administered. You are aware, Sir, how intimately this question is connected with salvation, and

¹ Maimburg after Eusebius. ² Gelasius.

how fatal would be the mistake, if their baptism were null and it were not conferred again in the Church. As the Scripture did not speak to the point, every thing was decided by the practice of the Churches. But at the time when the question arose, this practice was not as yet generally known; the conversion, the return of heretics, not being at that time an every day occurrence, nor even frequent in any country. St. Cyprian observing that in Africa they were received without a renewal of their baptism, and being ignorant also of the practice in remote countries, was induced by many plausible reasons to believe, that this custom was injurious to the true principles of the Church and its faith. He assembled his brethren at Carthage, and in concert with them he decided, that from that time forward they should change their method, and that baptism should be conferred anew upon all those who should relinquish their heresy. This decision made a noise: Stephen, the successor of Peter, proclaimed the voice of tradition from his chief and supreme chair. St. Cyprian, supposing that this tradition was neither general nor ancient, did not submit. The dispute continued, and was only settled by the decision of the council of Nice, which admitted without a renewal of baptism all heretics, except the disciples of Paul of Samosata, who altered the form of it. 'We ourselves,' says St. Augustine, speaking of the quarrel between Cyprian and the Pope, 'we should not dare to affirm with St. Stephen the validity of such a baptism, had it not been confirmed by the most perfect agreement of the Catholic Church, to whose authority St. Cyprian would have submitted, if in his time a general council had cleared up and decided the question.' The reformed religion must surrender itself to the evidence of this fact, and must acknowledge, with the great council of Nice, that scripture alone does not contain every essential, and that tradition can supply its silence; since here in default of the sacred books, every thing is decided by the ancient and general belief, justly considered as the doctrine of the apostles.

The reformed religion would never have thought of erecting

as a principle that the scripture alone decides every essential point, if it had recollected this decisive and unanswerable example, and if it had not lost sight of the ancient maxim, to which St. Augustine so often recurs: that we must consider as an institution of the apostles whatever we find to be generally believed and observed in the Churches without being able to discover its origin and commencement.

And if it had had before its eyes this doctrine of the first ages, set down by Vincent of Lerins, in these terms: 'we must be particularly careful to hold fast that doctrine, which has been believed in all places, at all times and by all. For as the word (catholic) itself plainly denotes, there is nothing truly and properly *catholic*, but that which comprehends all in general. Now it will be so, if we follow universality, antiquity, and unanimous consent. We shall follow *universality*, if we believe that doctrine alone to be true, which the Church every where admits. We shall follow *antiquity*, if we depart not from the opinions which our ancestors and fathers openly maintained. We shall follow *unanimous consent*, if we adhere to the sentiments of all, or of almost all, our pastors and teachers.'¹ And if it would have taken advice from St. John Chrysostom, who commenting on the famous passage of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, expresses himself as follows; 'Hence it is plain, that all things were not delivered in writing, but many otherwise; and are equally worthy to be believed. Wherefore let us hold fast to the traditions of the Church. It is tradition: let this suffice.'² And of St. Basil on the same passage: 'Among the points of belief and practice in the Church, some were delivered in writing, while others were received by apostolic tradition in mystery, that is in a hidden manner: but both have equal authority as far as piety is concerned; nor are they opposed by any one who is but slightly versed in ecclesiastical rites. For if we attempt to reject, as matters of little moment, such points, as were not written, we

¹ Commonit. i. n. ii. p. 317. Edit. Paris, 1684. ² Hom. iv. in 2 Thes ii. T. 9. p. 386. Ed. Paris, 1636.

shall, by our imprudence, offer a signal injury to the gospel." And again of St. Epiphanius, who proves the necessity of tradition. 'We must look to tradition, says he; for all things cannot be learned from scriptures. For which reason the holy apostles left some things in writing, and other not.'²

And if it had observed, what particularly merits observation from its singularity, our very question proposed in express terms by a celebrated writer of the second century and decided as follows; 'But you say, (writes Tertullian) even in speaking of tradition, some written authority is necessary. Let us then enquire whether no tradition should be admitted, unless it be written.' (This is precisely the objections laid claim to by the reformed religion: attend to its refutation.) 'I will allow, that it should not, if no examples of other practices can be adduced, which we maintain on the sole title of tradition, and the strength of custom, without the smallest written authority. To begin with baptism; when on the point of entering the water, we protest, in the Church and under the hands of the bishops, that we renounce the devil, and his pomps and his angels: after this, we are immersed three separate times, replying something more than our Saviour presented in the gospel. Leaving the water we take a mixture of milk and honey; and from this time, for the space of a week, we refrain from the daily bath. The sacrament of the Eucharist, instituted by the Lord, at the time of the repast and for all, we take in our assemblies before day, and only from the hand of him who presides. We offer for the dead; we annually celebrate the birth of the martyrs (The day of their death is the day of their birth to immortality) 'Of these and other usages if you ask for the written authority of the scriptures, none will be found. They spring from tradition, which practice has confirmed and obedience ratified.'³

The day would not suffice to adopt the expression of St.

¹ De Spir. Sancto. c. 27. T. iii. p. 54. Ed. Bened. Paris. 1721. ² Hær. 55. T. i. p. 471, Ed. Coloniae. 1682. ³ De corona Militis, iii. iv. p. 282. Edit. Rothomagi. 1662.

Basil,¹ were I to attempt to describe to you all that the fathers have said on the subject of tradition. I am not surprised that they so frequently insist upon it; they were but two or three degrees from the origin of the Church: they had a near view of the means and regulations that had tended to aggrandize and extend it: they held in mind that the apostles, entirely occupied in the ministry of the word, had rarely taken up the pen, and only from accident and necessity; that their preaching had been daily and abundant; their writing accidental and short; that supposing the ground of the doctrine to be in their writings, the development of it could not be found there also; that for the detail they must always have recourse to their verbal explanations; that, even on their mysteries and dogmas, they had in their works designly thrown a certain veil of obscurity to prevent the profane from having access to them, whilst in the midst of the faithful and their friends, they expressed themselves openly and

¹The day would not be sufficient, were I to attempt to relate to you all the mysteries transmitted to the Church without writing.* To omit others, from what writing have we this profession of faith in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (the apostles creed)? He had said before: 'Which of the saints have left us in writing the words of invocation in the consecration of the eucharistic bread and chalice? For we do not confine ourselves to those which the gospel and the apostle mention: we make additions before and after, as being of great importance to the mystery, and which are come down to us by an unwritten tradition.† And again, the following remarkable words occur in the same passage: 'The apostles and the fathers, who have from the beginning, prescribed certain rites to the Church, knew how to preserve for mysteries their becoming dignity, by the secrecy and silence in which it kept them enveloped. For what is thrown open to the ear and the gaze of the people, is no longer absolutely mysterious. For this reason have many things been transmitted to us without writing, lest the vulgar becoming too much familiarized with our dogmas, should pass from familiarity to contempt. The dogma is one thing, and preaching another. Dogmas require to be kept silent—preaching to be public. There is, moreover, another kind of silence, that of obscurity, in which the scripture purposely conceals 'itself to render the dogmas more difficult to be comprehended.' And now, Sir, draw your conclusion, what this learned bishop of Cesarea ‡ would have thought of your reformation, that pretends to take every thing from scripture and nothing from tradition.

* De Spir. Sancto. c. 27. T. III. p. 54. Ed. Bened. Paris, 1721.

† De Spir. Sancto. c. 27. T. III. ‡ St. Basil, archbishop of Cesarea, in Cappadocia, died in 379.

without restraint; in fine, that they never committed to writing the words and prayers with which they accompanied the celebration of the mysteries. These sacred and often essential forms were deposited in the hearts and the memory, and transmitted from mouth to mouth more securely in secret. After the example of their masters, the apostolic fathers wrote little: they also had their time taken up in active employment, rather than in composing works; and when they took up their pen it was scarcely ever for any other reason than to make known to strangers, what they had heard preached by the apostles. Day by day did they repeat it round about them to their audience, and occasionally communicated it at a distance by writing. In this manner, in the Churches where the apostles had preached, their doctrine was preserved by the succession of disciples to the apostles, of hearers of the disciples to these same disciples, and thus from one to another. As for those from without, it reached them by means of communications carried on from one Church to another; a steady and active correspondence attested and propagated through the world the instructions derived from the apostles and Jesus Christ, by establishing, according to the vigorous expression of Tertullian, *consanguinity* of doctrine in all the Churches of the world.

Did any doubt or new question arise, recourse was immediately had to the apostolic Churches: they consulted by preference those Churches, in which 'presided still the chairs, whence the apostles had often delivered their public discourses,¹ (and which after them seem to have been left vacant from respect;) in which were recited their authentic epistles, that recalled as it were the sound of their voices and the features of their countenances.'² Observe that Tertullian joins here the chairs of the apostles with their epistles; to indicate that the written word and the word delivered by preaching always went together. 'Are you in the neighborhood of Achaia? You have Corinth: are you at no great distance from Macedonia? You have the Church of the Phillippians, and of the Thessalonians: but if you can reach as far as Asia, you have Ephesus;³ approach Italy, and you have

¹ Tertull. on Prescript. ² Ibid. ³ 'The Church of Ephesus, founded by Paul,

Rome," The dignity of which Tertullian forgets not to set off in the most noble and sensible manner according to the true principles of Christianity. 'See what Rome has learned, what it has taught, and the perfect harmony of its doctrine with that of the African Churches.' Thus you will understand, sir, they did not upon new questions involve themselves in disputes which end in nothing: they did not permit themselves to be carried away by their private fancy or their enthusiasm: they did not abandon themselves to learned and laborious disquisitions, they did not regulate themselves according to the ostentation and display of a few teachers: all was decided by the doctrine and the tradition of the apostolical Churches. It was in this, according to the happy expression of Thomassin, that consisted their learned simplicity and their solid method of examining questions of faith.

A particular circumstance contributed much to preserve in these illustrious ages: the purity of the apostolic traditions. God, in the views of his providence over his Church, permitted during dangers and persecutions, that some of these first and holy bishops should extend their career to a very advanced age: and as formerly, in the old world; the patriarchs, by means of their long years, more easily transmitted to posterity what they had learned from their fathers and grandfathers on the creation of the world, the dogmas of religion and the principal features of the antediluvian history, so in Christianity these venerable old men served to testify that the faith of their time was exactly the same as that which they had received from the apostles and the disciples of the apostles. Not to speak of St. John, who lived a century, and of his centenary disciple Polycarp, who suffered martyrdom in 166, we learn from Clement of Alexandria, 'that some of those who had immediately succeeded the apostles, and preserved the tradition of the true doctrine preached by

governed by John. (He there terminated his days after having resided there a long time with the mother whom Jesus Christ bequeathed to him from the height of the cross), until the reign of Trajan, is without contradiction one of the best witnesses of apostolic tradition.' Irenæus, xxiii. 'Tertull. Ibid.

Saints Peter, James, John and Paul, had lived till the time in which he was writing his *Stromata*, to sow and cultivate the seed of true faith in the minds of men.¹ This remark, it must be allowed, would have been as useless as misplaced, on the principle of the reformation: for what need was there of the long life of these holy personages to preserve the apostolic traditions; and cultivate in the mind the seed of true faith, if there had been nothing for them to believe or practice but what they read in the scriptures, or what could easily be deduced therefrom?

However, sir, do not imagine that by here making war with the first promoters of the reformation, I mean to extend the same reproaches to all those who have since been born in its bosom. Among the distinguished characters of which it has reason to boast, there are a great number who have thought themselves bound to abandon it in its overstretched maxims on the sufficiency of the scriptures: this must be said to their praise, it is an act of justice due to them, which I take pleasure in discharging. Scarcely were the first controversies opened, when many already perceived that, in the spirit of party, they had carried things too far. They began by entering into a composition upon the principle, being desirous indeed to admit tradition upon certain points, and to reject it upon others, for the honor of the reformation.² These primary concessions opened the way for others

Clement of Alexandria, died in 217. He wrote his *Stromata* towards the end of the second century. Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem in 212, succeeded Narcissus, who died at the age of 116 years, being born, of course, in 96, when the aged Simeon was bishop of Jerusalem. Simeon, suffered martyrdom in 108, aged 120, born, therefore, 12 years before Jesus Christ. Narcissus, who died about the year 220, aged 124, and who was born, of course about the year 96, must have seen Simeon twelve years: Alexander, in 212 coadjutor of Narcissus, eight years: he suffered martyrdom in 255.

¹ It is remarkable that the Confession of Augsburg* and the apology declare, that they do not despise the agreement of the Catholic Church, and go so far as to appeal to the authority of the ancient Church. Zuinglius† grants that the apostles taught by word of mouth, and that the epistles they sent were rather to confirm the people in what they had learned, than to instruct them.

Calvin and Beza were not slow in having recourse to tradition against the Arians, sprung from their school. Ochin had said‡ 'The sacred words are of

* Art. 21. † Tom. ii. fol. 43. ‡ Dial. 2.

more open and less limited, and some wise and enlightened minds, after calmly contemplating the precepts of the apostles, the spirit of the primitive Church, and the confidence they could not refuse to the piety, and fervor of the first ages, to the depositions and testimony of all those holy bishops and illustrious martyrs of Jesus Christ, have felt the irresistible force of the proofs and have openly adopted the ideas and the language of antiquity upon tradition. Of these I could cite many; but shall confine myself to three or four whom I shall not choose among the least known or distinguished.

Gortius shall speak the first.¹ 'From the confession of Rivet, what is said by the apostles, either by the express command of God, or with full deliberation, has not less authority than what has been written by them. Nothing is more true. Now, that the apostles have not written all they have uttered, St. Paul himself testifies, by ordering that we submit to all that he had taught

themselves very clear, even in things necessary for salvation; and if the Trinity does not clearly appear in them, no one is obliged to believe in it.... I do not find that the Holy Spirit is there called God or Lord. I had rather enter a cloister than acknowledge that.* But Calvin, leading them to the unwritten word, taught them from the second epistle to Timothy: By this is repelled the arrogance of any senseless creatures, who boast that they stand in no need of teachers, because the reading of the scriptures is sufficient. He that shall make no account of the aid of the living voice, and shall content himself with the dumb scripture, shall feel how great an evil it is to despise the means ordained by God and Jesus Christ for being introduced.† What then! holy fathers,' exclaimed Beza ‡ against Stator, Ochin, and others, 'you, who for so many years, not in word alone but in writings which shall never perish, have, contrary to the authority of so many kings, princes, and heretics, with so much labor, even to the shedding of your blood, defended the great mystery of the Trinity, shall it be said that you are imprudent and ignorant? O Athanasius! thou who didst on account of this subject traverse almost the whole world, for what reason didst thou compose and construct that admirable creed with so much brevity, &c.‖

¹ This is taken from his *Votum pro pace*, page 137, a judicious and impartial little work composed against Rivet and those who, like him were opposed to a reconciliation with the Catholic Church. It is much to be regretted that this work is not more known. It cannot be too much recommended to the perusal of all protestant societies. You will find it in English, *a voice for peace*.

* Dial. 4. † Cited in Florimond, p. 955. ‡ Ibid. 959.... ‖ Beza's book on the punishment of heretics.....

whether *by word or by writing.*' Here Grotius subjoins the passage from St. Chrysostom which I have cited above, and concludes that in both cases the authority is the same. 'But, says the Doctor, we are sure of the writings; we cannot be so of the words. This I positively deny. The writings are full of variations, as is seen on comparing the manuscripts. In some there are particles which are not in others. There is a diversity of words, whether insulated or united. To separate and collect the original is neither a small labor, nor always successful. But how can we be certain that there are apostolic traditions? says Doctor Rivet. In this way. In the first place, it may reasonably be presumed that we must attribute to the apostles what is found to prevail every where, and what has no other known origin. To this if you add the witnesses of acknowledged piety, prudence, and authority in the Church, and who say to you; This comes from the apostles, we have then all the proof that can be desired upon these matters, the same precisely by which we distinguish the apostolic writings from those which are not so.'

'I grant also, writes M. Leibnitz to Bossuet,¹ that not only the knowledge of the canon (of the scriptures) but even of any part of the scripture is not absolutely necessary; that there are many people without the scripture, and that oral instruction, or tradition, may supply its defect.' Compare this acknowledgment with the principle of the reformation. M. Leibnitz gives more to tradition than St. Irenæus asked for it in the second century.

He had said in a preceding letter:² 'The question is whether the revealed truths are all of them in the sacred scripture, or are come at least from apostolic tradition, which is not denied by many of the more accommodating among protestants.' Upon which the illustrious prelate observes: 'We are not here disputing about apostolic traditions, since you yourself say that the more accommodating, that is, as I understand, not only the most

¹ Letter the 36th in the Œuvres de Bossuet, tom. xi. Paris edition in 4to 1778.

² Letter the 31st Ibid. tom. ii.

learned, but also the most judicious protestants, do not deny it, as I believe in fact I have remarked in your learned Calixtus and his disciples.¹

M. Leibnitz moreover, or rather M. Molanus, skilful associate in the project of conciliation, treats tradition or the unwritten word as follows.² 'What disputes are started upon this subject! They may easily be terminated by saying that the question between us and the Catholics is not whether there are traditions, but whether there are any articles necessary for salvation, which are not in scripture, or which cannot be fairly inferred from it. This latter is what protestants deny. But the more moderate amongst them are agreed that we are indebted to tradition not only for the scripture, but also for its true and orthodox sense to the fundamental articles; not to speak of other things which Calixtus, Horneius, and Chemnitius have long since acknowledged can not be known, except by this means. Certainly those among the protestants who receive, with the apostles' and the Athanasian creed, the five first general councils and the councils of Orange and Melevis, with the agreement of at least the five first ages, as a second principle in theology, in such manner that the fundamental articles cannot be otherwise explained than they have been by the unanimous consent of the doctors, will scarcely have wherewith to dispute with the Church of Rome.' The observation of M. Bossuet upon this chapter of M. Molanus is very short. 'As for what relates to tradition the same author is agreed with us, that we are indebted to it not only for the Holy Scripture, but also for *the legitimate and natural interpretation of this scripture, and that there are truths that we cannot know except by its assistance*: which is quite sufficient for us: so that on this article we are completely reconciled, if we are to believe this learned writer.'³

It may appear strange to you, and yet it is very true, that the man who perhaps had the most to do with the drawing up of

¹ Letter the 32nd in the *Œuvres de Bossuet*, tom. ii. Paris edition in 4to 1778.

² *Œuvres posthumes de Bossuet*, vol. I. p. 98. Amsterdam edition in 4to. 1753.¹

³ *Œuvres posthumes de Bossuet*, vol. I. p. 215.

the thirty-nine articles, I mean bishop Jewell, continually rests upon tradition, upon the fathers and the primitive Church, in the Apology that he published in 1562, with the approbation of his brethren, and by order of the supreme governess, and also, as we are assured, with the unlimited applause of all the protestant societies in Europe. Here then is the authority of tradition recognized, invoked, and appealed to in their own defence by the spiritual lords of the convocation, at the very time they had just been rejecting it indirectly, by declaring that the scripture alone was to be applied to for every essential of salvation. Let these gentlemen settle it among one another as they know best. As for myself, I throw aside here their sixth article, and adhere to the authentic testimony of their apology in favor of tradition.

In a most excellent work, entitled *England's Conversion and Reformation compared*,¹ I find a passage taken from a protestant work,² the author of which was probably a member of the Church of England. This protestant writer, who is quoted, after having considered the precepts of St. Paul on oral traditions, makes the following reflections:³ 'Here we see plain mention of St. Paul's tradition, consequently of apostolical traditions delivered by word of mouth, as well as by epistles or in writing; and a condemnation of those who do not equally observe both (and still more a condemnation of those, who despise them so far as to put them quite aside as the authors of the reformation and of the sixth article have done.) 'Thus it is evident, (continues he, page 78,) 'that the whole of Christianity, was at first delivered to the bishops succeeding the apostles by *oral tradition*; and they were also commanded to keep it, and deliver it to their successors in the same manner, nor is it any where found in scripture by St. Paul or any other of the apostles; *that they would either jointly or separately write down all that they had taught as necessary to salvation*, or that they would make such a complete canon of them, that nothing should be necessary to salvation but what should be found in these writings.' These most just

¹ Page 34 Antwerp, 1736. ² Tradition necessary. ³ Pages 32, 33.

observations directly oppose the sixth article, and must be considered as an unequivocal disavowel of them.

I am¹ not of those who admire the great knowledge in divine matters revealed in this latter age of the world, I do not think there are any now so likely to discover the truth of gospel mysteries as those of ancient days. As for that saying; a pigmy set on a giant's shoulder may see more than the giant; pardon me if I call it a shallow and silly fancy, nothing to our purpose; for our question is not of seeing more, but of the clear discerning and judging those things we all see, but are in doubt what they mean; if a pigmy and a giant see a beast at a mile distant, and are in dispute whether it be a horse or an ox, the pigmy set on the giant's shoulder, is never the nearer discerning what it is, which depends on the sharpness of sight, not on the height of his shoulders: Now that the ancient and holy fathers of the Church were more spiritual and consequently sharper sighted in spiritual things than we carnal creatures of this latter age is evident by their spiritual holy lives; The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. ii. 14. And how natural, how carnal, how purblind we are, is too visible. Besides a purblind man near the object, will discern it better than a much sharper sight at a greater distance as we are. For if you ask those lofty conceited pigmies why they give more credit to the fathers of the second and third century, than to those of the sixth or seventh, they answer, because those that lived nearer the days of Christ and his apostles, are likelier to know their minds better than those of remoter and corrupted ages; the reason is good, but mightily confounds those who live at the very part of the hill in the valley of darkness and all iniquity, and therefore not so likely to discern the truth of the doctrine of Christ, preached on the top of Mount Sion, as those who lived in higher ascents. Wherefore I shall always hearken with due reverence unto what those primitive holy fathers deliv-

¹ From Lord Somer's Tract, p. 341. Vol. iii.

er, and the more holy and more ancient, doubtless more to be regarded.'

Beveridge,¹ the learned bishop of St. Asaph's, after having said, to humor the sixth of the thirty-nine articles, that in the precepts necessary for salvation the Scripture was very clear to all eyes, developes his sentiments as follows: 'In objects of doctrine and disciple, if we would neither err nor transgress, let us beware above all things of adhering obstinately to our conceptions and conjectures, or to those of others. Let us rather examine what has been the opinion of the universal Church, or at least of the major part of Christians: and let us attach ourselves to the opinion that has been unanimously adopted by the Christians of all ages. For as in the entire consent of all consists the voice of nature, says Cicero, so in disputed points the consent of all Christians should be held as the voice of the gospel. There are many articles which are not read in express terms in the Scripture, and which nevertheless are deduced from it by the universal assent of Christians, for example, that we must adore three distinct persons in the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that each of these is God, and that nevertheless there is but one God; That Christ is God and man in one and the same person (are these articles necessary for salvation or not?) These points and similar others are not traced out at full length in either of the two Testaments; and nevertheless, that they are founded upon both, is what is agreed and has always been agreed by Christians, with the exception of some heretics, whom we must consider in religion as we do monsters in nature. And again, that the infant should be washed in the holy water of baptism and the Sunday religiously observed; that every year we must solemnize the passion, resurrection and ascension of our Saviour, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, and that the Church must be governed by bishops, distinguished from priests; and superior to them; these articles and others besides are no where expressly commanded in holy writ; and nevertheless, for these fifteen

¹ Latin preface to the collection of canons of the primitive Church.

hundred years, they have been followed in the public practice of the Church: they are, as it were notions common to all, planted from the beginning in the hearts of Christians, derived from the tradition of the apostles, who, together with the faith, propagated in the world these ecclesiastical rites, and, if I may term them so, these general interpretations of the gospel; otherwise it would be incredible, and even impossible that they should have obtained so unanimous a reception in all places, in all times, and among all Christians.

Among the partisans and defenders of the primitive traditions, you may also reckon Thorndike, Collier, Bull, Samuel Parker, Bramhall, Dodwell, Waterland, &c.¹ In fine the antagonist and the avowed despiser of the holy fathers, Doctor Middleton, is disconsolate at finding so many admirers and disciples of them among the divines of the Church of England. 'But though this doctrine of the sufficiency of the Scriptures, says he, be generally professed through all the reformed Churches, yet it has happened, I know not how, in our own, that its divines have been apt on all occasions, to join the authority of the primitive Church, to that of sacred writ, to supply doctrines from the ancient councils, on which the scriptures are either silent or thought defective; to add the holy fathers to the college of the apostles; and by ascribing the same gifts and powers to them both, (here the doctor is not correct) to raise the primitive traditions to an equality with apostolical precepts.²

¹ That I may not extend my citations too far, I shall content myself with adding the following names of their brethren:—

The archbishops Tillotson and Wake; bishops Bilson, Montague, Andrews, Potter, Cosins, Bramhal, Kall, Overal, Peploe, Patrick, and Forbes: the honorable M. Campbell, and Sir Edwd. Dering: doctors Field, Hammond, Sherlock, Leslie, Cave, Chillingworth, Grabe, Bisse, Reeve, Knight, Hickes, Laurence, Wall, Brett; and Messrs. Bingham, Johnson, Griffith and Daille.

The passages from these authors will be found cited in the interesting work of Dr. Wix, *Reflections, &c.*, from page 40 to page 78, second edition, London, 1752.

² *Introductory Discourse*, p. 67. to a free inquiry into the miraculous powers, &c. by Conyers Middleton, principal librarian of the University of Cambridge, Edit. in 4to London, 1752.

But what are we to say of this Dr. Middleton, who after having opened all the monuments of tradition, after having cast an inquisitive and penetrating eye into

From all that has been hitherto set forth in this letter, I think it clearly follows that revelation was at first taught entirely by the preaching of the apostles and disciples; that in the course of their ministry it was at different intervals and partially pub-

the writings of the holy fathers, feels himself all at once seized with a religious horror, and shudders within himself? And what is it he has seen? Catholicism, good God! Catholicism in full perfection: He says it, he proves it; and instead of concluding that they had done wrong at the reformation, when they rose up against venerable dogmas and practices; instead of preferring the fathers nearest to the apostles, and their most faithful and holy imitators, before his religious and turbulent ancestors of the sixteenth century; this mad and whimsical genius immediately changes his colors, throws aside all tradition and banishes the fathers far from him; he will have no more to do with them, because he cannot surrender himself up to the primitive Church without renouncing his dear and glorious reformation.

It had entered his head, and nothing in the world could make him put it out again; it had then forcibly entered his head, that the mass, its altars, its sacrifice, praying for the dead, and of course purgatory, the sign of the cross, the holy oils, the invocation of saints, and the honor paid to relics were superstitious and idolatrous dogmas and usages. He discovers them, however, from the time of the primitive ages: he frankly acknowledges it. Well then! these primitive and apostolic times shall no longer be considered by him but as idolatrous and superstitious ages: and according to him nothing less shall be required than all the lights and all the virtues of a Luther and a Calvin, to effect at length the disengagement of Christianity from its ancient rust, and from the stains of its origin. Does not this savor of madness and blasphemy! Who would not be alarmed at the excesses to which even the best instructed might be driven, when once left to themselves and their prejudices?

I beg you will give yourself the satisfaction for a moment of comparing Dr. Middleton with bishop Croft. This latter, far from admiring the great lights so much boasted of in modern times on subjects of Theology, is of opinion that the doctrine being more immediate at its source, it must be purer and more certain; the former, on the contrary, persuades himself, that scarcely had religion been promulgated when it became generally corrupted, to such a degree as to be unable to recover its original beauty until sixteen centuries after its divine founder. The one, seized with respect and love for the models of virtue and knowledge presented to him in such abundance by the primitive Church, falls at the feet of venerable and holy antiquity; the other, sorely offended at some miraculous facts or at some opinions which he found up and down the writings of the fathers and which no one obliged him to adopt, is not ashamed to sully their reputation and want of talent; he protests nevertheless that he recognizes them as valid witnesses, and yet in point of fact persists in denying the authority of their testimony. The bishop piously declares that he shall lend them a respectful ear, and yet never does so: he remains deaf to their instructions, and in his vale of darkness he discovers not, in their writings, either the mass or sacrifice, or praying for the

lished in the inspired writings; and that thus it has been transmitted to the world in two manners, by word and by writing, that is to say, by tradition and by scripture, the twofold original and sacred deposite of the Christian doctrine; the one, first in point of time and long by itself, gathered together at first in the hearts and the memories of the faithful, then deposited by little and little, and in detached pieces in the writings of the fathers, and the acts of the councils; the other, of latter and gradual

dead, or veneration for relics and images, or the invocation of saints, &c. The doctor, to make amends, although more deeply confined in the same dark vale, has seen, heard, and understood every thing, but takes good care not to believe any thing, or to bow to authority upon these articles.

Here certainly are two persons in whom learning abounds: and yet they agree none the better on that account. The truth is, that learning even misleads, if not engrafted upon fixed and invariable principles. Never will you find an example similar to this amongst us, whilst you will behold a thousand of the kind among your teachers. And ought not this at length to convince the prudent and moderate members of the reformed religion, that by leaving to each one the right of judging for himself, there will be as great a diversity in opinions as in tastes,* and that the wholesome restraint of authority is alone able to subdue the indocility, and the proud and capricious impetuosity of the human mind. *Date frænum indomito animali et impotenti nature.*

But if we are to believe all these fathers, said Middleton, we are at once necessarily drawn into popery. Give to the doctrine of the father whatever name you please, call it popery, if it suit you. Is it not better, is it not safer to be a papist with the Austins, Jeromes, Ambroses, Hilarys, Chrysostoms, Basils, Cyrils, Athanasiuses, Cyprians, Justins, Tertullians, Ignatiuses, and Clements, with those apostolic men, those unexceptionable witnesses, who have astounded the world by their virtues, and by an heroic end, and who still edify us by their writings, than to continue in protestantism in the train of Luther, Calvin Zuinglius, Beza Knox, and Buchanan, or, if you please, of bishops Barlow, Scory, Hodgskin, Kitchen, &c., who have rendered their names famous, some by their audacity in violating the vow of their first engagements, others by their servile flexibility to the will of the existing powers, some by seditions, wars, and rivers of blood, all by a revolt against their mother Church, and not one of whom, to my knowledge, has yet been remarked for an humble and tender piety, for the mortification of his senses, the abnegation of himself, or the austerity of his manners or for an angelical and spiritual life. In truth, is it lawful, or is it reasonable to balance between the two! And have I not myself to blush here to see myself constrained to tarnish the memory of these illustrious saints by so unworthy a comparison!

* Doctor Middleton acknowledges this in express terms. 'It is every man's right to judge for himself, and difference of opinion is as natural to us as a difference of taste.' page 38, 16.

appearance, but fixed legibly upon paper by the apostles or their disciples, a durable and divine monument, which will speak forever to the eyes, as well as to the minds and hearts of all the faithful: the former, requiring a longer and more laborious research, and being more difficult of discovery, because it is scattered and spread through a greater number of monuments, and is often found mixed up with many subjects, which though not absolutely foreign to revelation, are nevertheless not it: the latter, full of an inspired and heavenly doctrine, but which is sometimes inaccessible in its sublimities, and like every written law, never being able, without an interpreter and judge to make itself understood and followed with uniformity. The Scripture more copious without comparison, more rich, more precious, more excellent, and nevertheless leaving some articles to be desired; tradition destined above all to transmit to us these same articles, by supplying what is wanting in the sacred books. Whence it follows again, that if it were permitted or expedient to make choice between these two deposits, and to accept one without the other, the preference would undoubtedly be due to that of the scripture: but that according to sound reason and the doctrine of wise antiquity, according to the command of St. Paul, they are absolutely inseparable; that, one presenting us with articles not to be found in the other, we must bring together and consult them both, to form a whole and know the complete system of revelation; that, as for the rest, coming to us, as on two parallel lines, they can never impede or oppose one another in their progress, but that on the contrary they render each other a mutual assistance, and reciprocally throw light upon each other; in fine, that we owe equally to what either of them contains, both our respect and our submission, because the same spirit which directed the pen of the apostles, directed also their tongue, and the words that came from their mouth are not less divine than those that they afterwards traced out with their hand.

LETTER V.

On the Doctrines Taught by the Church.

ON reading the preceding letter, I anticipate there may probably have arisen a difficulty in your mind. How can we be certain, will you have said, that such or such a doctrine is truly of apostolic tradition, that such an article, sufficient traces of which I do not find in Scripture, has been actually taught by the apostles and faithfully transmitted from them to us? This point, I flatter myself, shall soon be cleared up for you, if you will have the patience to examine what I have to lay before you, and if I succeed in expressing to you with perspicuity those ideas which I shall now attempt to develope.

If each of us was obliged to distinguish among many articles, those which come from tradition, and those which do not, he would find himself, in a general way, condemned to a labor above his strength. In fact, that part of the preaching of the apostles which they did not commit to writing, was at first confided solely to the memory of the faithful, fixed in particular Churches by the oral and successive instructions of the first bishops and afterwards collected partially and as occasion fell out, in the writings of the fathers, and in the acts of the synods and councils. Whence it follows, that to prove that such an article is truly of apostolic tradition, we must consult the belief of the particular Churches, examine carefully the acts of the councils and the voluminous writings of the fathers of the Greek and Latin Churches. Who does not see that this labor requires a space of time and extent of erudition, that renders it in general impracticable? There are, indeed, to be found men of an extraordinary capacity and application, whose taste and inclination lead them to this kind of research; with the aid of the rules of criticism, all founded upon good sense, they balance and weigh authorities, they distinguish between what the fathers taught, as individual teachers, and what they depose as testifiers to the belief and

practice of their time, and they attach with discrimination the different degrees of credibility that are due, whether to their doctrine or their deposition. The world is well aware that such a labor is calculated but for a small number: and again, after all, how successful soever it may be, it scarcely ever leads to incontestible conclusions. We therefore are in want of some other means that may enable us altogether with certainty to arrive at the apostolic and divine traditions. The question is, what is this means?

Call to mind, Sir, what we have said upon the holy scripture: we have clearly discovered that, seeing the ignorance and incapacity of some, and the pride and infatuation of others, the authority of an interpreter, of an infallible judge, was absolutely necessary to make known, and cause to be uniformly adopted the dogmas contained in scripture. We must say as much, and with still better right, for tradition. The same judge, the same interpreter that unfolds to us the sense of the divine books, manifests to us also that of tradition. Now this judge, this interpreter, I must tell you here again, is the teaching body of the Church, the bishops united in the same opinion, at least in a great majority. It is to them that, in the person of the apostles, were made the magnificent promises: 'Go, teach, I am with you; he that heareth you heareth me. The Spirit of truth shall teach you all truth, &c.' They alone then have the right to teach what is revealed, to declare what is in the written or unwritten word: they alone also have always been in possession of the exercise of it. No other ecclesiastics have ever pretended to it, whatever have been their rank, their dignity, and learning. They may be consulted and heard; it is even proper this should be done, and it always has been done; for they form the council of the bishops, and their erudition acquired by long study throws light upon the discussions. But as they have not the plenitude of the priesthood, they are not members of the eminent body that has succeeded the college of the apostles, and with it received the promises. They are then without power and authority to pronounce: their duty is respectfully to await the decision, and when once it is passed, to submit to it. Before the decision,

they were at liberty and permitted to discuss the question on the opposite side, to support their opinion with the weight of their erudition, the strength and warmth of their eloquence: after superiors have pronounced, all disputations are forbidden, discussion is closed: mixed from henceforth with the simple and little ones, the most learned doctors lay down their private opinions, humbly confess that they were in error, and receive the decision of the bishops as decrees emanating from heaven. Such is the regulation of Jesus Christ, who suffers not in his Church either pride, or bloated conceit, or obstinacy whether in the rich, the great or the learned ones of the world. Immediately he has spoken by his ministers, he wills that all heads, those even by means of which he has made himself; he wills, I say, that all heads should with equal humility and lowliness bow before his oracles.

Let it then be established as a principle, that to the bishops exclusively belongs the right of declaring what has or has not been revealed, that is, what is conformable or contrary to scripture and tradition, or simply to one of the two. This is precisely the extent of their authority: never does it go farther. They can add nothing to revelation: they can take nothing from it: they are its interpreters and judges, but not its masters. In teaching us what we have to believe, they point out to us what has always been believed: they merely render the belief more explicit and clear, there, where before it was more vague and indistinct. It is therefore always the ancient faith that they propose to us, and never a new faith that they introduce: for revelation is not a new faith which we are permitted to revise and retract: it came forth in full perfection from Jesus Christ; and his disciples, inspired by him, have faithfully transmitted it whether by word of mouth or by writing, to their successors, enjoining them at the same time to transmit it with the same fidelity to those who should succeed them.

Thus the bishops, on succeeding to the apostolic ministry, find themselves specially commissioned to guard the Scriptures and tradition. They had already spent their clerical years and those

of their priesthood in becoming acquainted with them, studying them and meditating upon them. Being by their episcopacy become the guardians and interpreters of this double deposit of revelation, they have it more assiduously in their hands and under their eyes. Does any new doctrine arise that must soon require on their part a dogmatical decision, they prepare themselves for it by redoubling their application, by consulting each deposit alternately, by comparing them together, by making deeper researches into them with all the care, which, humanly speaking, they are capable of: and, assuredly, when they shall come to the decision, He, *who is always with them*, and who is to *instruct them in all truth*, will never permit them all to agree in giving an erroneous sense to the written word, or the word that is not written. Their common decision will necessarily and uniformly be conformed to them, whether they infer it from both at once, or only from one of them. You and I might not have perceived it in either one or the other of these sources, but eyes interiorly enlightened by a celestial ray discover with certainty that which escapes a merely human penetration. We can therefore no longer admit a doubt respecting any dogma, that the teaching body of the Church has pronounced to have been revealed by Jesus Christ, that is, to be contained in Scripture, or in tradition, or in both at the same time. Learned and ignorant, the decision is for all: not that it is forbidden to those who feel so disposed, to seek for the truth of the dogma, either in Scripture or in the monuments of tradition: far from that, this study would merit praise and commendation, being previously directed and put in the way by the judgment of the Church, they will more easily trace in it her doctrines. But nothing obliges us in general to undertake this laborious and fatiguing examination; our masters, our fathers in faith have done it for us. They have afterwards decided that such a dogma is in scripture, that such another comes from an apostolic tradition: they are of one accord in teaching it: we know it: it is a fact, it is known by the most simple: this is sufficient for all. All are equally bound to receive with the most unshaken confidence a decision which in it-

self is the most impartial and the most imposing that can be found upon earth, and which moreover, heaven has engaged to raise to infallibility.¹

As this doctrine has been hitherto quite a stranger to you, and as it properly constitutes the distinctive characteristic between the Catholic Church and all protestant societies, allow me to lay it open to you in a new light, in order to make you more sensible of it. In the first place, always keep in mind that, according to all our proofs, the promise of infallibility made in the apostles to their successors, does not regard any of these personally and in particular, because Jesus Christ does not remain for ever with any one, none of them being immortal; but that it is addressed to all their successors collectively and in a body. Likewise it follows that, if separately and individually they are susceptible of error, they cannot, by virtue of the promise, be so, when united together; that whatever deference their personal opinions require from us, we nevertheless do not owe the sacrifice of our opinion or our interior submission except to their unanimous decision; that truth being always to be found in the general agreement, it is this agreement we are bound to know and follow, since by following it we cannot go astray, and by not following it, on the contrary, we do go astray, for then we go out of the way and the line that Jesus Christ has drawn for us, and we leave the guides whom he has expressly appointed to conduct us. Let us therefore be cautious how we ever close our ears to their voices, or ever depart from their uniform instructions. In whatever circumstances their consent is manifested, when once it is known, when once it becomes manifest to us, it is sufficient: our duty is to submit, and our salvation to remain firmly attached to it.

And here I beg you to observe that a dogmatical decision may be given in many ways, but that it only becomes decisive and peremptory in one way, that is, by the general consent, or the

¹ "Nothing should be more venerable upon earth than the decision of a truly oecumenical council." Leibnitz, letter to the Duchess of Brunswick. July 2nd, 1694.

acceptation of the episcopal body united to its head. I will explain myself on the two parts of this proposition.

The bishops, the successors of the apostles, like them the guardians of the faith, by the high dignity with which they are invested in the Church, possess exclusively the right of interpreting scripture and tradition, and of pronouncing after the one or the other upon points of faith.¹ A pernicious doctrine threatens to trouble or infect a diocese: the bishop has the power and the right to assemble his clergy, and, after having maturely deliberated with them, to pronounce a doctrinal sentence, when he becomes of opinion that this is a suitable and efficient means of stifling the error in its infancy. Arius began to spread the venom of his doctrine in Alexandria, and had already gained partisans by the subtlety of his reasoning. The holy patriarch 'wishing to reclaim him by sweetness rather than compel him by authority, selected some priests from the two parties, who defended their arguments on both sides in a regular disputation, while he, surrounded with the principal of his clergy, presided as judge in this conference, to decide the difference by a solemn decision..... He terminated the dispute by pronouncing sentence in favor of those who had supported the divinity and eternity of the Son of God, and forbade Arius to teach or to hold an opinion that destroyed the foundations of the Christian religion.'²

With how much more reason does this same right pre-eminently belong to him, who presides over the entire episcopacy, and who, from the centre of unity where he holds his see, extends his superintendance and jurisdiction over all the Churches of the world? Accordingly we find, even from the most remote periods, that the greater part of dogmatical decisions have originated from this principal see, from which beams the ray of government, according to an expression as correct as it is brilliant.³ If you

¹ "Episcopum oportet judicare, interpretari, consecrare." *Pontif. Rom.* in fol. p. 50. The bishop is the only ordinary and natural judge of whatever regards religion, and it is for him to decide upon questions of faith and morality, by interpreting the sacred scripture and by faithfully relating the tradition of the fathers. Fleury, *Institute. au droit eccl.* t. I. xii. ² Maimbourg, *Hist. de l'arian.* t. I. p. 17 and l. ³ Sermon sur l'unité.

consider on the one hand the ever active vigilance exercised by the vicar of Jesus Christ over all the Churches; on the other, those intimations which, in great causes, every bishop thinks himself bound to forward to him, you will easily conceive that nothing essential in religion could escape his knowledge, nothing of importance occur at the most distant extremities, without being immediately echoed to the centre, and then, without giving time to the error to increase, without waiting for the bishops to assemble in council, the chief pastor goes before the evil, drags to light the rising heresy, solemnly condemns it, and against it, produces to the eyes of the world, the ever pure and indefectible tradition of the holy see.

We learn also from the history of the Church that the bishops of a province or an empire, frequently united together in private councils, and that there, to ward off the blows aimed against faith, they have proscribed erroneous opinions, and taught the true doctrine of revelation in their dogmatical decrees.

Here then are doctrinal decrees given in three different manners, or coming from three different tribunals. Each of these decisions has an authority proper to itself, and proportioned to the tribunal from which it emanates: yet none of them is decisive, although it may become so by acceptation. For if the decrees of a private council, or of the sovereign pontiff, or even that of a private bishop is found to be received and generally approved of by the bishops dispersed throughout Catholicity, and by the pope at the head of all, they then become the decrees of the universal Church; their being generally received attaches to them the seal of infallibility and ranks them thenceforward among the articles of faith.

There occur, in fine, less frequent but graver and more solemn occasions, on which the Church explains and proclaims its doctrine in the most imposing and most splendid manner. For example, a pernicious doctrine, after having infested the country where it sprung up, reaches the neighboring nations, is propagating through more distant countries, and threatens to extend its ravages still further; a general plague requires a co-extensive

remedy : from all parts of the world, at the request or with the consent of the sovereigns, the bishops are convoked by the head of the Church : they anathematize the innovators and their opinions, both to fix in the faith those who have hitherto professed it, and to bring back those who have strayed from it : they proclaim to the world what Jesus Christ has revealed. I do not enter with you into the questions that are discussed among divines, on the conditions requisite to constitute these councils, called general in spite of the weak minority of the bishops who compose them compared with those who do not assist at them. What is incontestable and acknowledged is, that the acceptance of the published decrees gives to these councils the splendid proof of their being œcumenical, and thus puts out of doubt and in full evidence the infallibility of their doctrine.

I could justify the principles I have just laid down, by the testimony of a multitude of writers : of these I shall cite but one, who was the light of his own age, and will be the light of ages to come. ‘The last mark we can have that a council or assembly truly represents the Catholic Church, is when the whole body of the episcopacy, and the whole society that makes profession of receiving instruction from it, approves and receives it : this is the last seal to the authority of this council, and of the infallibility of its decrees.’¹ ‘The council of Orange, of which mention is made in the Reply, was nothing less than general. It contained chapters whom the pope had sent. There hardly were twelve or thirteen bishops in this council. But because it was received without opposition, its decisions are no more rejected than those of the council of Nice ; *because every thing depends upon the consent*, or general agreement of the dispersed Church. Even the author of the Reply (Leibnitz or Molanus) admits this truth, that every thing depends on the certainty of the consent. The number is nothing, says he, when the agreement is notorious. There were but few bishops of the west in the council of Nice ; none in that of Constantinople ; in

¹ Bossuet’s reply to various letters of M. Leibnitz. Letter xxii. p. 115. vol. xi. edit. in 4to. 1778.

those of Ephesus and Chalcedon, only the pope's legates; and so of others. But *because all the world agreed, or have since agreed*, these decrees are the decrees of the world. If we choose to go still higher. Paul of Samosata was only condemned by a private council, held at Antioch; but because its decree was addressed to all the bishops of the world, and was received by them (for it is in this that all its virtue consists and without this the address would avail nothing), this decree is unchangeable.¹

I thoroughly understand your theory, you reply, and perhaps it would be more easy for you to persuade me of it, than to get it adopted by a great number of your Catholics. Formerly I traveled in Italy; I questioned some doctors of that country, and heard them reason quite otherwise upon this point. They maintained that infallibility, which according to you belongs to the episcopal body, was the personal attribute of the vicar of Jesus Christ; and they were within a trifle of treating as heresy

¹ Ibid. p. 120, 121. And again in the *Defense au Clerge de France*, Liv. viii. iii. 'After the dissolution of the first council of Constantinople, pope Damasus assisted in person at that of Rome, held by the western bishops who rendered the council of Constance œcumenical, by *consenting to its decrees*.' And in ch. V. of the same book, I find nearly the same thing in one of the circular letters written after the council of Chalcedon. These are the words: 'Almost all the bishops of the west, with common consent, and with them the holy archbishop of Rome (Saint Leo), have confirmed with their voice and in writing, the decisions of the holy fathers assembled at Chalcedon.' And again, ch. IX. he cites these words of Pope Gelasius: 'An illegitimate council is neither received by all the Church, nor specially approved of by the Holy See.*' Thus it is necessary that the approbation of the principal Churches should appear with more distinction, it is true, than that of other Churches; *but it is not less necessary*, that the consent of the whole Church should take place. The consent of the Holy See, or if you please, its confirmation, joined to the approbation of the universal Church, forms, therefore, the final testimony of the canonicity of a council. . . . This general testimony is not only calculated to confound malignant interpretations, but also sometimes to remove the difficulties of the best of people, who although convinced of the infallibility of the œcumenical councils, may honestly have their doubts whether such a council is œcumenical. . . . Thus we have great reason to be convinced that the consent of the universal Church, joined to the confirmation of the Holy See, forms the *final and decisive* proof of a council being œcumenical.

* Gelas. Epist. 18 *ad Epis Dard*.

the contrary opinion of the Gallicans. Thus then you are involved in an intestine war upon a most important article. For it is not enough for you to believe that the Church has by your divine legislator been put in possession of so high a prerogative: you ought moreover to know in what part of the Church this possession resides: if it were in the general body of the bishops, as would result from your proofs, it is inconceivable that this general body does not know that this prerogative belongs to them. But you have yet to learn in what part of the Church to fix it, some placing it in the sovereign Pontiff, others in the œcumenical council, by which the universal body of bishops is represented. First agree together among yourselves, if you please, before you require protestants to come into your opinion.'

I am very well pleased, Sir, that you furnish me an opportunity of replying to this difficulty: your ministers have repeated it to us a hundred times: it is plausible, I do not deny it. I will give you satisfaction on this point, as briefly as possible. 1st, There is a point, which the Catholics of all countries fall in with and which suffices to produce an acknowledgment from all parties of the supreme and infallible authority. In fact, those who place it in the chief bishop maintain also that it never can happen that the great number of bishops should separate from him. Therefore, where the majority of the bishops visibly appears according to both parties, is infallibility to be found: according to us who attribute it to this majority; and according to them, who teach that the pope can never be separated from it in solemn decisions. On both sides therefore it is granted that infallibility is inseparable from the great number of pastors. 2ndly, There is another principle on which we agree with the advocates of papal infallibility. They have no difficulty in acknowledging that the majority of the bishops is infallible when united to the successors of St. Peter; and we have still less in acknowledging him infallible when united to the majority of the bishops. Thus on both sides the strength consists in the union of the head with the members: thus on both sides there is always infallibility where the great number of the pastors is united

to him who is at their head. And in point of fact, they are certainly united among themselves: in point of fact, they must necessarily be so, they must of necessity agree upon the same doctrine, otherwise they would cease to regard themselves as forming one and the same body, one and the same Church. But if ever it should happen, which God forbid, and which we Gallicans think impossible, if it ever should happen, that the great number should separate from the head, it would then be necessary that one of the two parties should adopt the sentiments of the other. to preserve the Church from schism, the greatest of all evils.

3rdly, When we examine more narrowly this dispute, so much agitated in the schools, it appears that it should be banished among speculative and idle questions, and that in the main both parties meet in the same opinion. In fact the warmest and most skilful defenders of the pontifical prerogative teach that a sentence proceeding from the chair of Peter, *does not become a decree of faith, but by the acceptance of the Church spread through the world.* They must therefore argue upon the judgments passed *ex cathedra*, as we all do upon the judgments passed by general councils, the infallibility of which is recognised by every Catholic; and say with us: It is by the acceptance, that we are convinced that a council is really œcumenical and it is by acceptance equally that we know with certainty that the pope has pronounced *ex cathedra*. Thus we all agree in the same principle; and both are ultimately found to attach the seal of infallibility to the universal agreement of the Church.¹

I cannot refrain from giving you in conclusion the satisfaction of reading your difficulty and the reply drawn out with a master-hand. ‘Protestants reproach us with investing the Church with an infallibility, for which we can find no subject, since some place it in the pope alone, others in the general council, and others in the whole body of the Church spread throughout the world. They are unwilling to see that these sentiments, which

¹ This argument is from Bossuet. See *Coroll. Defens. Cier. Gallic.* par. 8, et *Dissert. præv.* parag 21.

they suppose to be contrary to each other, accord perfectly together: since those who acknowledge infallibility in the pope even alone, acknowledge it with greater reason when all the Church is agreed with him: and those, who place it in the council, place it with much more reason in the Church which the council represented. This then is the Catholic doctrine, perfectly agreeing in all its parts: Infallibility resides originally in the body of the Church. Whence it follows that it resides also in the council, that represents it, and which virtually contains it: that is, in a council, which, publicly acting as œcumenical, remains in communion with the rest of the Church, and of which also the decisions are for this reason regarded, as decisions of the whole body. Thus the authority of the council is established upon the authority and the consent of the whole Church, or rather it is nothing else but this authority and this same consent.⁷

As for the pope, who is bound to give the common sentiment of the whole Church, when it cannot assemble or when it does not judge it necessary to do so, it is very certain with us, that when he delivers, as he is bound to do, the common sentiment of the Church, and when all the Church consents to his judgment, it is in effect the judgment of all the Church, and of course an infallible judgment. Whatever is said more than this on the subject of the pope is neither of faith, nor is it necessary, because it is sufficient that the Church has a means unanimously recognised, for deciding controversies, that might produce disunion among the people.⁸

⁷ *Œuvres posthumes de Bossuet*, t. I. p. 217. Edit. in 4to. The Reformers attacked the exorbitant power which, in their time, was more generally attributed to the pope, in the things both of heaven and of earth. If they had confined themselves to proving that those pretensions were novel, that they ill accorded with the spirit of the gospel, with the doctrine of the fathers, and with that of the most holy and illustrious sovereign pontiffs, we should then have only had to praise their zeal in the support of true principles. But, far from shewing this spirit of moderation and wisdom, they railed against the successor of St. Peter with the most disgraceful coarseness: they put forth against the Holy See insults so low and disgusting, that one would blush to transcribe them: indeed they would be revolting to creditable persons of all countries. Men of God would

never have spoken as they did. But a man who is not an apostle does not adopt the tone of one—he must be an apostle to possess it. Were there no other reproach to be made against the Reformers, who would not judge, by their passionate and furious expressions, that God could never raise up for the reformation of his Church a set of brutish and furious characters, uttering the language of demons?

If we may be allowed to judge of the sentiments of the Greeks by one of their able and moderate writers, here is what Helias Meniates bishop of Zerniza said towards the close of the seventeenth century:* ‘I consider the dispute upon the supreme power of the pope to be the principal cause of our division: ‘it is the wall of separation between the two Churches..... If it were possible to understand one another upon this single point, it would not be difficult to adjust the others, and to arrive at a perfect re-union.’† Placing himself afterwards between the protestants and the ultramontanists, this learned man shews to the former that the pope, far from being antichrist, is the legitimate successor of the apostles, and that he is at the head of the hierarchy of the universal Church. Against the latter, he maintains that the pope is not an all powerful monarch in the Church, that the bishops derive not their authority from him, but from Jesus Christ: he willingly allows that he is the first among his brethren, and that he occupies in the midst of them the first place of honor: he maintains moreover, that he is neither sole judge, nor sole interpreter of revelation: that he is not above the council nor invested with the privilege of infallibility: but that these prerogatives belong to the universal Church: that it is above the pope, with the right of judging his conduct: he maintains moreover, that Jesus Christ has not conferred upon him any power in temporal things, far from having put sceptres and crowns at the feet and the disposal of his vicar, whom he made a bishop in his Church and not an emperor of the world.

We say to our mistaken brethren of the protestant Churches: Join us in throwing a veil over the abuse with which the see of St. Peter has been covered. Enter into the sentiments of the informed and moderate ones among you. You have already heard Melanchton: ‘There is no dispute about the superiority of the pope and the authority of the bishops.....the monarchy of the pope would also tend very much to preserve agreement in doctrine among many nations!’ And forget not the saying of Grotious: ‘Let the bishops, says he, preside over the priests, the metropolitan over the bishops, and, above all, the bishop of Rome. This order ought always to remain in the Church, because a cause for it always remains—the danger of schism.’

We say to our separate brethren, the Christians of the Greek Church: How can you prolong a schism, the most direful of all evils, and the most unpardonable of all crimes, for opinions, which you are permitted not to adopt? They seem to you inadmissible? They seem so to us also. Faith never commanded them; do not therefore take fright at them, but become united with us. The concessions

* *The Stumbling-block*, a work translated into many languages. † Melanchton on the contrary had said, that they should nearly come to an understanding on the subject of the pope, if they could agree upon the rest. The reason is because the rest is a great deal between us and the protestants, and almost nothing between the Greeks and us.

already made by the learned of your body are almost sufficient for us. Without doubt they would not have refused the little that remained for them to do, after the example of their ancestors in the councils of Lyons and Florence. Let us unite: we were united for nine successive centuries; and our Churches then were both of them more holy and flourishing.

We say in fine, with all the respect that we profess for our superiors and brethren of the Ultramontanist Churches, we say to them: You, who would still be imbued with the exaggerated principles which in modern times have taken birth among you, reflect on all the evils they have brought upon the Church, and that, instead of giving to the holy see a power which it did not possess, they have deprived it of that which it really had: reflect upon the calumnies they have occasioned, upon the inquietudes that even friendly powers have often conceived from them: reflect upon the jealousies and aversions they have fostered in protestant states, on the pretexs they still furnish to the Greek Churches to continue and justify their schism. Do not motives so manifold and powerful imperatively command the sacrifice, or at least the silence of some arbitrary maxims? Maintain with us the authority of the head of the Church. Let us maintain it all entire. To retrench from it would be to wound faith; but let us not forget that *in its plenitude even the ocean itself has its bounds.*

Will you say that, regarding the question as not yet decided, it is lawful for you, as in every undecided question, to support the opinion that you prefer? The principle is assuredly very Catholic: I object only to its application, which I would find in this case to be blind and even reprehensible. Whenever from any opinion there result consequences fatal to the Church and to the salvation of souls, charity and justice require it to be sacrificed. It is certain that by pressing the ultramontane principles, an eternal obstacle would be put to the return of the separated communions. I would not at the same time ensure the reconciliation of the Greeks with us, if we were all to come to an understanding with them on the authority of the pope. They say so, even those among them most capable of leading the people. To believe them, your assertions alone keep them still separate. And is this not enough to make it a duty for you to renounce them or be silent on them? For, I ask you, if the first and most unpardonable of crimes be to take off the people from unity, is it not the first of our duties to bring them back to it, to say nothing at least that may frighten them from it without necessity? Do not therefore, I conjure you, render their return to union more difficult but endeavor rather to clear the way. You will at least have put the Greeks to the trial: and we shall ascertain, in an affair of the first importance, whether their acknowledgments were sincere or not.

But if your opinions seem to you too closely connected with faith to be abandoned, pray keep them to yourselves, until the Church shall have pronounced them to be articles of faith.

“As for the things that are known to be disputed about the schools, although the *Greeks* and protestants are perpetually bringing them forward to render the *primacy* odious, it is not necessary to speak of them, because they are not of Catholic faith. It suffices to acknowledge a head established by God to conduct all the flock in its ways: and this will always cheerfully be done by those who love concord among brethren and ecclesiastical unanimity.” *Esprit de la duct. cathol.* sect. 21.

L E T T E R VI.

On the Eucharist.

WE have seen that revelation, confided immediately to the apostles, had been transmitted by them by word of mouth and writing: that by them, the twofold deposit of scripture and tradition had been committed to their disciples, to pass from hand to hand, and from age to age to their successors, whose office it would be to seek in them exclusively, and no where else, the articles of the Christian doctrine, and whose privilege, to deduce them from these sources, without ever being in danger collectively of going astray. We have seen that the duty and obligation of the faithful were to submit to the uniform instructions they should receive from them; and that the belief of the Catholic whether learned or ignorant rested with equal solidity upon the doctrine of the episcopal body united to its head. We have seen in fine, that this infallible teaching was, above all, manifested to us in the solemn decrees universally received by the bishops of Catholicity. Whence it follows, that we admit without hesitation as articles of faith, whatever the Church teaches us, and proposes to us as such and as revealed.

Thus we believe and we confess, as of faith, the divinity of Jesus Christ, defined against Arius in the great council of Nice;¹ the divinity of the Holy Ghost taught against Macedonius by the oecumenical council of Constantinople.² We believe of faith that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, from the decision successively given against the Greeks in the general councils of Lateran, of Lyons and Florence.³ We believe of faith the unity of person in Jesus Christ, with the general council of Ephesus⁴ held against Nestorius, and with the same council we proclaim the Virgin Mary *mother of God*. From the council of Chalcedon⁵ against Eutyches, we believe, as of faith, the two natures, human and divine, united and not confounded

¹ An. 325. ² An. 381. ³ An. 1215, 1274, 1439. ⁴ An. 431. ⁵ An. 451.

in the person of our Saviour. Original sin, denied in the fifth age, by Pelagius, we believe to be of faith from the doctrine of several councils of the same age, from the constitution of Pope Zozimus, universally received by all the bishops, with the exception of eighteen, who were deposed for it; from the first and fourth canons of the general council of Ephesus, and since then from the decrees of the council of Trent. Guided by these high authorities, we believe as of faith, the necessity of baptism to efface in us that mysterious stain, and open heaven to the unfortunate race of the guilty Adam.

So far, Sir, you are agreed with us upon these different points of doctrine. Your reformers have respected them; they have found them two strongly imprinted on their own conscience, too deeply rooted in the minds of the people, to think of ever striking a blow at them. Nevertheless they have said enough to give to others more audacity, and soon after to instruct the Socinians that they might boldly proceed still further and attack those fundamental truths of Christianity. The right of judging having been once granted to each one, there is no longer any thing sacred, any thing firm, any thing that can stand its ground.

Thank heaven! they have not advanced so far in your Church. They have continued to believe and teach the dogmas I have mentioned, and some others connected with them. Observe nevertheless upon what different principles they are believed in your communion and in ours. The principle of the Church of England is, to admit as revealed and as necessary for salvation, only the dogmas which are read in Scripture, or may be duly inferred from it. And here, Sir, speak to me, I beseech you, with candor; have you learned these dogmas, which you believe to be essential, in Scripture? Have you examined and thoroughly searched the sacred text? have you compared the passages together? Not, assuredly, that I doubt, that with the penetration and justness of mind that I know you to possess, you would not of yourself have discovered the truth of these dogmas in the passages of Scripture, where they are established. But as for this

examination, this search, I know you have never entered upon it. The nature of the business, with which you have been occupied, has given you neither time nor liberty, nor even the inclination to throw yourself into theological researches. You believe simply from the instructions you have received from your parents, from your masters, who in the same manner had received them from theirs, and so on, up to the period of the Reformation. Your belief and the belief of your countrymen in general, has not then, if thoroughly analyzed, any other support than the authority of your reformers, who never pretended that they were infallible, and have most strenuously maintained they were not so. See where you are, and how much your faith, your salvation are found to be left at hazard, upon mere human authority, and consequently wavering, perishable and faulty. But the Catholic, full of the promise, convinced that Jesus Christ, who has spoken by his apostles, will always speak by their successors, certain that he cannot go astray in the steps of guides whom he is ordered to follow, feels himself firm in faith and in the way of salvation. He knows that both are built upon the Church, as on an immovable rock, against the foot of which the efforts of hell shall eternally be broken in pieces.

Instructed by the same authority, the Catholic admits in the number of the articles of faith and of the revealed mysteries, that of the most august of sacraments, the Eucharist; under each of the kinds of bread and wine, the substance of which no longer exist, he adores Jesus Christ veiled, but yet present whole and entire. He knows, or may easily know, that at the period when for the first time this belief was attacked in the eleventh age by Berengarius, a cry of indignation was raised on all sides against him: that the ancient faith was maintained by the teachers of Christianity, among others by Lanfranc, the learned archbishop of Canterbury, and unanimously defined by many councils, as it has been since defined in the council of Trent. Here unfortunately the lists were entered between the Protestant societies and the Catholic Church, and we are about to find ourselves at variance; it having seemed good to your an-

cestors, after having agreed with us upon all other mysteries, to leave us and attack us upon this. Your convocation of 1562, had not the same reason for sparing it, which had made the former convocations respect it. From the reign of Edward the sixth, the opinions of Zuinglius had been held in esteem; they had made a melancholy progress in your country, and even your new bishops had not been able to preserve themselves from them: in their twenty-eighth article they condemn transubstantiation, reject at the same time the worship and adoration of Jesus Christ in his sacrament, as being contrary to the text of the Scriptures and the institution of the Eucharist.

As to the real presence, which should be looked upon as the great article, the principal point of the mystery, they shewed themselves more reserved: they say not openly that it must be admitted or rejected: they adopt a form of expression that seems to accommodate itself to one or other of these opinions. It is plain that they were equally apprehensive of alarming those who yet held in great numbers to the real presence, and those who wished to get rid of it. M. Burnet with more than his usual candor and with his accustomed correctness of mind admires this dexterous scrupulousness of the convocation. He takes pleasure in remarking that the article was couched in such a manner as to serve each one's purpose, and that all might more easily be attracted and might thus increase the rising Church. That an insidious and weak government should adopt this mode of proceeding is quite in character: this artful method may serve the views and interests of the moment, but is it agreeable with an eternal and divine religion? Is it not unworthy of the episcopal character? Faith knows no such temporizing measures, such vagueness and indecision: its course is upright; its language simple, precise, and decided. It enters into no compacts with error, because it can have no alliance with it. In truth, these political expedients of your spiritual lords sufficiently disclosed their secret thoughts, and a man must have been very simple indeed to let himself be deceived by such pitiful artifices: for, in fine, if all or the greater part had believed the real

presence, they would have thought it a point of duty and honor to have loudly professed it, and to have warned their flocks against the heresy, by condemning with a sacerdotal vigor the opinions of Zuinglius. They did not then for the most part believe it, their silence shews they did not. Why then did they not immediately proceed openly to condemn it? What mean this embarrassment, these snares, these concerted concealments? You discover here, Sir, the inevitable march of error. At all times it has shewn itself timid and hesitating at the commencement, and its first steps have always been faltering and uncertain.

I should but use my right, were I to refuse all further discussion, and refer you, upon the Eucharist as upon all other articles of faith, to the decisions pronounced by the Church. I have established its authority: I have shewn that it received it from its divine Founder; that when he was leaving the earth he bequeathed it to his apostles, and, in their persons, to those who should succeed them in the ministry: that he had never ceased to teach by their instrumentality and would continue to the end of the world to teach by that of their successors: that, in consequence, the doctrines of the Church will always be protected from error; that, by hearing the Church, we hear Jesus Christ; and by despising the Church we despise Jesus Christ. You have seen the proofs of all this: they have appeared to you convincing. And if the impression they have made upon you is weakened, read them over again: subject them, if you please, to a new examination. But when once a person is convinced of their solidity, there is no longer room for hesitation. The decision is past, every thing is said: all that remains is to accept it and submit to it. This simple, and at the same time safe method abridges for every Catholic, whether learned or ignorant, the interminable difficulties that exist in protestant societies.

But the arguments you have often heard opposed to the belief of Catholics upon this mystery, those that you have read in the writings of your teachers have made a deep impression upon you. They frequently return to your mind, and balance, as

you say, the force of the general inference drawn from an infallible authority. Well! then, Sir, I am willing to enter with you into the heart of this controverted point: I engage to justify to you the decrees of the Church upon the Eucharist, and to shew you their conformity with the doctrine of Jesus Christ. I foresee its full extent: I have it at one glance with all its proofs before my eyes. Oh! that I could but lay it before your eyes with the same rapidity! but the dissertation must necessarily be long: you must submit to it: it is necessary for your peace of mind: the subject is all important. I should also be apprehensive that my silence might appear to you a tacit acknowledgment of the weakness of my cause: and I ought not to give your teachers this kind of advantage in your mind.

Before we set about developing the proofs, it will be well to remove certain general difficulties, which might diminish their effect. These difficulties are produced, in some, by the false notions conjured up by a heated imagination; in others by specious reasons, which seem to demonstrate the physical impossibility of the real presence. The first are indignant at the very idea of the consequences which they imagine themselves obliged to admit. If Jesus Christ were really present in the Eucharist, he would then, say they, be abandoned to the mercy of the wicked: he would have put himself into the power of his creatures, by giving them the power of offering to his adorable body the most shameful indignities; of casting him to animals, of dragging him in the mud, and treading him under foot. But, in the first place, these persons do not reflect that similar objections might be made against the presence of God which they admit in the universe. They will reply no doubt, that God is not present in all places in substance, as we say the Eucharist is but only by his infinite knowledge and by the action of an unlimited power. Were the observation correct, the objections would not the less forcibly recur: for does it not seem unworthy of his supreme majesty that his pure and immortal eye should be open to every scene of horror and debauchery? What representations, what work full of folly and turpitude, what dis-

gusting and infamous images find place in the divine conceptions, and become reflected upon the increated Word? Far from us however be such illusions! God sees all crimes, and his eye is not defiled: he knows them, and the purity of his essence remains uninjured.¹ And let us equally be on our guard how we believe that the profanations exercised upon a consecrated host can touch and affect the person of Jesus Christ. The only right he has granted his ministers over it, is to be able, at their will, to render it present upon the altar, and that in a manner which it is not given them to comprehend. The wicked may indeed, profane the veils under which he conceals himself, may prostitute them to unclean animals: may throw them into the mud or under their feet: for he abandons to their mad outrages the cover he places between himself and them, of itself contemptible and common, it is true, and yet most deserving our respect and our veneration from the presence of the sacred guest, whom it holds concealed from our eyes. Here their profanations stop: they reach not his adorable body, on which he gives them no hold: inaccessible to all their senses, he is also screened from all their attempts: and not less impalpable than invisible, in the midst of the most shameful outrages, his divine person remains eternally impassible and inviolable.

Others borrow their arguments from still more abstracted

¹ Saint Peter Chrysologus, archbishop of Ravenna, * speaking of the woman who came secretly behind our Saviour, and touched the hem of his garment, as if to gain from him by stealth the cure of the flux of blood under which she had labored for twelve years, makes the following reflection: 'She knew that the Divinity could neither be tarnished by the touch, nor offended at the sight, nor injured by the hearing, nor stained by the thoughts of man. For if the sun by its rays comes in contact with dirt and filth without being defiled, with how much more reason can the Creator of the sun come in contact with any thing whatsoever, without contracting the least stain or defilement?' †

Origen had said before him: 'Celsus imagines that the divine nature is defiled or that it is mixed up with defilement whether in remaining in the womb of a woman until its body was formed there, or in assuming this same body. It is like those who believe that the rays of the sun are sullied by passing over sloughs or bad smells, and that they do not preserve all their purity.' *Against Celsus*. Book IV. n. 326.

* An. 334. † Sermon 35.

metaphysical sources, and with an air of triumph display to us their pretended demonstrations of the impossibility of one body existing in many places at the same time. Their triumph without dispute, would be, certain, did the question turn upon a body existing in the Eucharist under the same forms and with the natural qualities and proportions of a human body: for certainly it will never enter any one's mind to believe or propose to be believed that a body such as yours or mine can be simultaneously in many places. But we are speaking of a body passed to a state entirely different from our own, become impalpable, invisible, inaccessible to all our senses: we are speaking of a presence, the manner of which we pretend not to explain, which we acknowledge to be above our understanding. In what manner would they shew the impossibility of such a presence being simultaneously multiplied, and of the existence of such a body in many places at once? Would they maintain it to be more impossible than impalpability and invisibility? If they allow that our Lord could derogate from the ordinary laws of matter, to such a degree as to conceal his body from all our senses, can he not still further derogate from them so as to render it present in many places at once? Have we a sufficient knowledge of the properties of matter to deny this? Have we sufficiently penetrated into its essence? For, to affirm the impossibility of any thing whatsoever is to assert that the qualities that are attributed to it are repugnant to, or mutually exclude one another. This cannot be proved, if we do not know them: the first step then is to know them: and up to this time the primitive elements, the intimate qualities of matter, the modifications of which it is susceptible under the hand of the Almighty, are mysteries to man. Whatever progress may have been made in the analysis of bodies, their formation and organization always elude our inquiries; in this respect as in every thing else, the secret of the Creator has not yet been discovered. I am sorry, I confess, for those transcendant geniuses, who, to justify their incredulity and overturn our belief, transport us with them into unknown regions, and would have us adopt as luminous de-

monstrations the arguments they produce for us out of sight in the void and the night of chaos. What is remarkable, is, that they make no difficulty in admitting other mysteries, not less incomprehensible than this. You believe with us, I would say to them, the Trinity and Incarnation, and have not these dogmas their inaccessible heights? Does not the Socinian imagine that he discovers in them impossibilities and absurdities? You reply to him that his objections prove only the limits of the human mind and in no wise the impossibility of these dogmas: it is just so that I answer you respecting the Eucharist. Does not the birth of Jesus Christ appear repugnant to our ideas of things? that he should have taken a body and come into the world from the womb of a virgin, what is there in appearance more impossible than this, according to all that we observe of the laws of nature and the properties of the human body? that after his resurrection his disciples being assembled *and keeping the doors shut for fear of the Jews*,¹ he should have twice appeared in the midst of them, how are we to explain this prodigy and make it accord with the notions we have formed of matter?² And after his ascension, that he should have appeared to St. Paul in the same manner as he shewed himself after his passion to St. Peter, to his disciples and to more than five hundred brethren together,³ do you more easily conceive this? For we have manifestly here the presence of Jesus Christ in two places at once in heaven at the right hand of his Father, and on earth before St. Paul, to whom he shewed himself as he was before. To convince his apostles of his resurrection he had caused to be seen by their eyes, in his complete humanity, the same members, the same

¹ St. John, xx. 19.

² One of your teachers somewhere relates, that the disciples being assembled and closely shut up, Jesus Christ *flings the doors wide open* (that is his expression if my memory serves me faithfully, it certainly is the sense of it), and advances to the middle of the room. Such is the way this rare genius turns and changes as he pleases, the narrative of the gospel to accommodate his fancy! This is again the same Dr. Jortin whom I have cited before.

‘Quod januis clausis Dominus ingressus est, inter alia ejus miracula numerabit, quicumque sanæ mentis est.’ Cyril. Alex. sæculo v.

³ I. Corinth xv. 6.

features that they had known him to possess before his death.¹ What will you say again of the dogma of the general resurrection, the belief in which is common to us both? Can your imagination comprehend this mystery? Do you readily conceive the state in which our bodies will then be changed? Are you able to conceive that they can without ceasing to be the same divest themselves of all their sensual and terrestrial qualities, and put on those that are spiritualized and angelical? for, there, there is neither eating nor drinking; there they shall not marry or be married, says our Saviour, but shall be like angels.² And according to the sublime theology of St. Paul, the body 'is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory: it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power: it is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body: if there be a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.'³ After these incontestible truths, admitted and yet unintelligible, what means the difficulties you object to us? To what purpose do you create imaginary impossibilities upon a state of things that far surpass our comprehension? If God, as you doubt not, destines our sensual and gross bodies for a state of spirituality which we do not understand, why should not our Lord be able to put his body in another spiritual state still more incomprehensible? You reason upon matter such as we see it, and upon bodies such as they strike our senses: but here we are treating of a matter that is imperceptible, of a body that eludes all our senses. You speak to us of an animal body, whereas you should speak of a spiritual body. But you will reply, what do you mean by a spiritual body: and how are we to join these two ideas together? In truth, Sir, I am sure that they are joined; for we are taught so by St. Paul: but how and in what manner, I know not, any more than you do. And here it is that all our

¹ 'Nemo ascendit in cœlum, nisi qui descendit de cœlo, *Filius hominis qui est in cœlo.* Joan. iii. 13.

'No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that hath descended from heaven, *the son of man who is in heaven.*' Challoner. These words of Jesus to Nicodemus prove that Jesus Christ was at the same time on earth and in heaven.

² Matt. xxii. 30. ³ I. Corinth. xv. 42.

metaphysical reasonings upon the Eucharist come to a termination, in our ignorance.

I will add one general observation upon mysteries. Revelation speaks to us of a supernatural order, and talks to us of a life to come and of the kingdom of God. This revelation comes from heaven and invites us thither: it shows us the road and acquaints us with the means of arriving at it. Is it surprising that in all that it teaches about this unknown world there should be found some mysterious dogmas, whilst this world, in which we are born, this world, which has been created for us, every where offers us nothing but impenetrable objects, every where nothing but mysteries? We see every thing that passes around us, and we understand nothing, absolutely nothing. Fix upon any object you please in this world, from the smallest grain to the majestic cedar, from the imperceptible insect that would be wearied with traversing over the head of a pin, to the most monstrous animal, from the atom to the globes that roll over our heads in a space of immeasurable extent, and with a rapidity of movement that the imagination even cannot follow in its flight: every thing is mystery to us: every thing, both the drop of water that is shed from the cloud, and the sprig of the herb, that we tread under our feet, and the grain of sand that is carried by the wind, every thing is inexplicable; both that which we perceive and that with which we come more or less in contact or connection: every thing confounds our enquiry, every thing is mystery, and without doubt the greatest mystery to man is man himself.¹ Nevertheless we believe the existence of the objects, which surround us, and we have good reason for believing it, because the proofs of it are most certain. It is then upon proofs that depends and ought to depend our belief in every thing, whether in the natural or supernatural order: it is to proof that we must all adhere. What is proved, whether in itself conceivable or not, what is proved ought to be believed, and cannot be

¹ Make me understand and develope to me these inferior terrestrial things, and I will believe you capable of penetrating also into sublime and divine things.
St. Augustine.

otherwise than believed. Whence it follows that our examination ought to refer, not to the nature of the dogmas, which exceed the limits of our minds, but to the proofs of their existence, which we are capable of seeing and judging about. It is therefore a very foolish way of setting about it to say with your teachers: 'God cannot reveal that which is repugnant to reason; now the doctrine of the Eucharist is repugnant to reason: therefore, &c.' For then they are forced to enter into the nature of things that we all hold to be incomprehensible, and of course to wander from unknown to unknown, and to reason in the dark. But the method that good sense points out, and that the consciousness of our weakness should suggest, is this: 'God cannot reveal what is repugnant to reason; now, he has revealed or he has not revealed the dogmas of the Eucharist; therefore, &c.' For here we can all understand one another; here the examination and decision are brought to a level with our minds. It becomes a question of fact: Has God or has he not revealed the mystery of the Eucharist? If it is not proved that God has revealed it, let us all with one accord throw aside the mystery: if on the contrary the proofs of it are certain, we are all of us absolutely bound to submit to it: you and your teachers must indispensably admit it, pay homage to it, and throw aside the vain objections of an impotent and conceited reason. Now I wish to enter upon an examination of this question of fact with you: I undertake to convince you that the mystery of the Eucharist has been revealed to us, such as we now receive it.

We have seen that revelation had been transmitted to us by word of mouth and by writing: that, to know it entirely, we must have recourse to the two-fold deposit of scripture and tradition. I will proceed therefore to lay them before your eyes one after the other: and I hope, with the assistance of heaven, to produce in their favor proofs so decisive that you will be obliged to acknowledge, that this mystery, inconceivable as it is, has certainly been revealed to the world by Jesus Christ, and that the decrees of the Church upon the Eucharist are manifestly conformable with both the deposits of revelation.

The holy scripture,—The words of promise.

Open, if you please, the 6th chapter of the Gospel of St. John, which is too long to be here transcribed entire: and have the goodness merely to follow, with the book in your hand, the argument with which this chapter will supply you. The Evangelist relates in how miraculous a manner our Saviour fed in the desert the five thousand men who had followed him: how he withdrew himself by flight from the transports of their admiration, and the honors they wished to pay him by proclaiming him King: how towards night he rejoined the vessel of the apostles in the middle of the sea of Tiberias, walking over the waters to them: how, in fine, he himself was rejoined the next day at Caphernaum, by the multitude he had fed the day before. The conversation between Jesus and the Jewish multitude, which cannot be sufficiently meditated upon, commences at the 25th verse. After having blamed their eagerness for perishable food, and their indifference in seeking for meat that endureth to life everlasting, he tells them that the means of obtaining it is to believe in him whom God has sent them: he reproaches them for their incredulity in his regard, in spite of the miracles he had performed in their presence. He adds that the manna of which he had spoken, and which their fathers had eaten in the desert, was not the heavenly bread: that the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven: that he himself is the true heavenly bread, that he is come down from heaven: that he had been sent by his Father to save them. At these words the Jews no longer contain themselves. 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then saith he, I came down from heaven?' But Jesus without revealing to them the secret of his human birth, still leads them to his celestial origin and to his divine mission, and insists more strongly than ever upon the obligation of believing in his words and his testimony. Amen, amen I say to you: he that believeth in me hath everlasting life.² What is the meaning of this ex-

¹ Verse 42. ² Verse 47. . . .

ordium, and of this manner of opening himself by halves and by degrees? How comes it, that he reminds them at repeated intervals of the necessity of the faith due to his character, his miracles and divinity? What is the tendency of these preliminary recommendations? In what are they to end, or what is he thinking of proposing to them? Something very extraordinary no doubt, and very difficult to be received; otherwise he would have explained himself without making use of all these precautions.

The plan he always adopted was distantly to announce the great mysteries he was to accomplish. Thus he taught the necessity of baptism for entering the kingdom of heaven, before he instituted it: thus also his disciples often heard him discourse upon his passion, death, and resurrection, and on the descent of the Holy Ghost; thus he announced in this very chapter¹ his ascension and return into heaven. By admonishing them beforehand, he kept their minds in expectation: he humored also the weakness of man by sparing him the too lively impressions that unforeseen prodigies would have made upon his senses. Induced by these same motives he gives them intimation of a miracle which he was intending to work, and which would still more astonish human reason. He selected for its announcement the circumstance, which had the most analogy and connection with the Eucharist, that of the multiplication of the loaves, of which the very people whom he was addressing had just been witnesses.

After having convinced them of all the claims he had to their entire confidence, he proceeds at last to declare the object he is about, and expresses it concisely in these words, 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'² The secret hitherto concealed is now divulged: the great mystery is declared: it has been heard: it has been understood to signify a real presence; but will this real presence be believed? No: the Jews instead of trusting to Jesus Christ as to the manner in which he would give them

his flesh to eat, think only of that in which they eat common flesh : they moreover break out into murmurs, look at one another with marks of disapprobation and repugnance, and quickly exclaim : ‘ How can this man give us his flesh to eat ? ’ They had therefore clearly understood him to speak of a real manducation.

We will proceed no farther for the present. I have here two observations to make to you. When we propose to your teachers and those of their communion the august mystery of the Eucharist, do they not immediately begin to contest it ? do they not shew towards our belief signs of disapprobation, contempt, and aversion ? do they not disdainfully reply to us in the manner of the Jews of this gospel ; ‘ How can he give us his flesh to eat ? ’ In vain do we endeavor to represent to them that the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven ; that ‘ this bread that he has given us is his flesh, that flesh which he has given for the life of the world : and that what God demands of us, is to believe in him whom he has sent ; ’ and that according to the solemn declaration of our Saviour upon this same subject, ‘ he who believes in him has everlasting life. ’ In vain do we represent to them again that how high or incomprehensible soever this real manducation may be, the promise has quite as certainly proceeded from the mouth of Jesus Christ, and that if it is above reason to conceive it, it evidently is against reason to doubt of his word, where we cannot doubt that he has given it, and when we acknowledge his divinity. They cease not replying to us with the incredulous Jews ; ‘ How can he give us his flesh to eat ? ’

Let us for a moment change the scene of action, and suppose that one of your missionaries, explaining to an infidel this point of Christian doctrine, should produce, without intending it, the idea of a real manducation in the minds of his audience, and that they, being shocked at the proposition, cried out : ‘ What is it you mean to say ; or how shall your God be able to give us his flesh to eat ? ’ What would your missionary reply ? Should he not say that they had mistaken the meaning of his words ; that he never intended to propose to them the belief of a real manducation : that the flesh of Jesus Christ is not true but figurative

meat : that his blood is not real, but ideal drink ; that they have only to eat his flesh and drink his blood by faith : that the Eucharistic bread is the symbol of his body, the wine the symbol of his blood : that both one and the other are signs which his love has condescended to consecrate and leave us after him, to console us for his absence. In this way, or at least something like it, would your missionary explain himself in order to remove every idea of a real manducation. But does Jesus Christ set himself in this manner about removing the same idea, at which the Jews shewed themselves so shocked ? What reply does he make to the mad insult they offer him, by saying before his face ; ‘ How can this man give us his flesh to eat ? ’ Let us hear what he has in reply.

‘ Amen, amen, I say unto you (an affirmation which from the mouth of the Man-God is equivalent to an oath) ; except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life : and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat *indeed* and my blood is drink *indeed* : He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father : so also he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven..... He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.’ Are you not struck with what you have just heard ? Is there any thing wanting to these words to determine their meaning ? Confess that this language is very different from that which we have heard from the mouth of your missionary. Jesus Christ, far from removing the idea of a real manducation, confirms it anew in the minds of the Jews, shocked as they had already been at it : far from softening down the sense he had already given to his first words, he confirms it by an oath, and continues to present it perpetually in still more energetic terms : far from saying, like your teacher, that his flesh is but figurative meat, his blood an ideal drink, he affirms that his flesh is meat *indeed*, his blood, drink *indeed*. In the discourses of the missionary, we hear of nothing but of

figure, of symbol, of spiritual manducation, of a memorial and of absence: in that of Jesus Christ there is nothing of all this, not a word of symbolical or figurative language: in it every thing expresses, every thing confirms the reality of his flesh as meat, and of his blood as drink, the reality of the manducation: every thing declares and supposes his presence in the sacrament. He there communicates himself to him who eats it, as common meat is communicated to him who takes it and derives life from it: 'He that eateth me, abideth in me and I in him.' And again, he that shall eat him shall live by him as he lives by the Father: therefore he shall live by him in reality and in substance, as He lives by his Father. In fine, the truth of the manducation is compared to that of the mission he has received, and what is there more real and better attested than this heavenly mission? Thus you find on the part of Jesus Christ, his presence, communion and intimacy, by the fact of his body and blood being really given as meat and drink: on the part man, the reality of the manducation, the certain pledge of life, of resurrection and salvation: and all these prodigies attested by the reiterated affirmations and even by the oath of the Son of God. What more do you want to determine with certainty the meaning he attached to his words? What is wanting in them to convince you, and force your belief? After having exposed, repeated and confirmed so many times the sense of his real presence, shall not Jesus Christ succeed at last in persuading you to believe it: and will you always say with these blind and obstinate Jews: 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?'

Still one more observation. According to the principle of your teachers, the Jews could only have been wrong in understanding literally what he had said figuratively, and in taking for a real manducation, that which according to our Saviour's intention was only to take place by faith. But here by attempting to give this turn to the fault of the Jews, your teachers themselves are mistaken. In fact, had it been so, Jesus Christ would have immediately perceived the error of the Jews, and would not have permitted them to remain in it. There only

needed a word, to correct their mistake, to appease their murmurs, to reconcile their hearts to his doctrine; and yet this most simple explanation he refused to give them! He who always corrected his disciples, whenever they mistook his meaning,¹ he who had just performed a miracle to feed this multitude of Jews, and had attached them to him by his favors, he who came down from heaven but to instruct and to save,² he sees them become irritated and embittered against him merely from a misunderstanding, which he can easily remove, and he refuses to do it! he leaves them in error! what do I say? He himself throws them into it! for the strength of his expressions necessarily implied the reality. The Jews understood them so, neither ought they to have taken them in an opposite sense. It belonged to our Saviour to remove from their minds the idea that he had given them of the reality, if he had not wished that they should believe it; yet he does no such thing. It was the reality then that he had in view, the reality that he meant, the reality that he had promised, and that he wished them to believe beforehand on the word and assurance that he gave them of accomplishing it on a future occasion.

The fault of the Jews did not so much consist in misunderstanding him as in refusing to believe him, and if they deserved to be condemned, it was not for want of understanding so much as for a want of faith. I will explain myself: they understood Jesus Christ to say that he would give in reality his flesh to eat and his blood to drink; and they had had good reason for understanding him so: for, most assuredly it was what he had said. They judged that he could not give them his flesh to eat in the manner that the flesh of animals is eaten: and in this again they were right. What then was their fault? It was this: they were not aware of any other way of eating flesh than of tearing it with their teeth, either raw and bloody, or cooked and dressed: and because this is the only manner they are acquainted with, they conclude that there can be no other manner, and will not believe that there can be some other way unknown to them.

¹ St. Mark, xvi. 24. ² St. Matt. xvi. 11, xv. 16. &c.

They come to a decision according to their own ideas, and measure their faith by their limited conceptions: and not seeing the possibility of what Jesus announces to them they refuse to believe it.¹ But had they not often heard speak of him as of an extraordinary personage? Had they not approached, known and followed him? Had they not been witness of many miracles, and quite recently, of the multiplication of the loaves? His deportment, his features, his august and majestic countenance, from which beamed a ray of his shrowded divinity,² his conversation full of a surprising wisdom, his most holy and pure life; every thing should have inspired them with confidence; every thing should have discovered to them in his person a superior character, a prophet who held nature under his control. In addition to this, he had just revealed to them that he was come down from heaven, that he had been sent to them by God his Father: imposture could have no share in such a soul as his was shewn to be, nor could lies proceed from his mouth. The Jews therefore ought to have believed in his heavenly mission and his divinity; they ought to have given credit to all his discourses,

¹ What Jesus Christ had already said to the Jews, with what he afterwards added in speaking in their presence to his disciples, was sufficient to let them understand that they must not adhere to the idea of a carnal manducation. He had already said, many times, that he was himself the living bread, the bread come down from heaven: that the bread that he would give them to eat was his flesh, which he would give for the life of the world: that whoever should eat of this bread should live for ever. By these repeated declarations he gave them sufficiently to understand, that they should eat his flesh under the form or appearance of bread, that they should participate of the substance of his body and be nourished by it under the appearance and image of this ordinary aliment of man: and when soon after he said to his disciples that they should see him go up to where he was before, was it not for the purpose of teaching them that he should not give his flesh to be eaten in a visible manner, because they should see him visibly disappear and mount up into heaven in body and person with all the sensible and natural proportions of the human body? Was not this telling them that although he should give them his flesh to eat, it would still remain, as before, living and entire: that therefore he spoke not of ordinary flesh, which must be given to support a mortal life, and to be torn in pieces and consumed when eaten?

² *Certe fulgor ipse et majestas divinitatis occult, quæ etiam in humanâ facie relucebat, ex primo ad se videntes trahere poterat aspectu.* Hyeron. *Homil. in Matth.* lib. 1.

and then have said to themselves: 'We cannot conceive, it is true, in what manner he can make us eat his flesh and drink his blood: but since he has said it and assured us of it, it certainly must be possible: he certainly must have means, which we know nothing of, for the accomplishment of his promise. He is holy, he is good: he cannot sport with our credulity: he is sent by God, he comes from heaven: he therefore knows all things and can do all things whatsoever he pleases: and when once he assures us that he will give us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink, we are immediately persuaded of it; we are convinced by his holy word, and without being able to conceive it, we believe it.' This is what they should have thought, should have said and firmly confessed. Their fault and condemnation lie in not having thought or acknowledged it; in having cast aside so many motives which required their entire confidence and reliance upon him; in having preferred their own conceptions to his: in having presumed to consider him as capable of proposing to them what is impossible, that is, of wishing to deceive them, or of deceiving himself, and, in this insulting alternative, in obstinately refusing to believe him.

These reflections on the unhappiness of the Jews create in my mind another reflection; which makes me afraid for you and those of your communion. Like unto these Jews, you reject the reality of the manducation that Jesus Christ announces to them, and with them you say; 'How can he give us his flesh to eat? But in you this incredulity becomes much more unpardonable. The Jews did not at that time know of the resurrection and ascension of our Saviour, or of the descent of the Holy Ghost announced by him, and followed by so many prodigies that have renewed the face of the earth. These splendid and divine operations have in your regard placed the authority of Jesus Christ beyond any thing the Jews could at that time know of it. They had seen some of his miracles, and had from them concluded that he was the prophet expected in those times. For his divinity they had his assertion, and it was sufficient in such a personage. But, besides this assertion, you have all the

proofs of it, and this is much more. You admit these proofs, you profess the divinity of Jesus Christ. Well, then! Sir, either cease to profess it, or cease to refuse your belief in him: for to acknowledge him as God and not believe his word: to hear him clearly telling you that he will give you in reality his flesh to eat, as he has said, and as is demonstrated, and nevertheless to maintain, to persist obstinately in maintaining that the thing is impossible; this is an extravagance much more insulting, much more to be condemned, than the blind incredulity of the Jews.

The Evangelist,¹ as if desirous of giving greater authenticity to his recital, remarks that this conversation took place in the village of Capharnaum, in full synagogue, where the multitude had assembled around Jesus. After the care he had taken to repeat and confirm so often, as we have heard, the reality of the manducation, it would seem that all his hearers should have ceased from their original opposition, and believed unanimously in his words. A melancholy and lamentable example of the weakness, the pride and blindness of the human mind! Incredulity, far from yielding to repeated assertions, becomes irritated at them. It is no longer among the people only, that it appears; it reaches even his disciples: This saying is hard, and who can hear it?² said many amongst them. Jesus, who read their hearts, turns to them and says; 'Doth this scandalize you? If then you shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before?³ Let us weigh well these words: coming from such a person they can never be sufficiently thought upon. If you are shocked, if you are scandalized at what I say to you, that I shall give you my flesh to eat, now that it is upon earth and before your eyes, how much more will you be scandalized when you shall see it go up to heaven and disappear from your sight? If this manducation appears to you incredible now that you see my body, how much more so will it appear to you, when you shall see it no more? His doctrine therefore was such that after his resurrection it would present more difficulties to be understood

¹ St. John vi. 60. ² Verse 61. ³ Verse 62, 63.

than before, and from this I conclude that his doctrine was not such as the reformed attribute to him. For it could not become more difficult for his disciples to comprehend a spiritual and figurative manducation after, than before his ascension: it would not have required any greater exertion to unite themselves to their master as a Saviour and a God, when they should believe him to be at the right hand of his Father, than when they saw him in the midst of them. Indeed, so far must their faith have been from finding a greater difficulty in reaching him in heaven than upon earth, that it must on the contrary have found much less: for the ascension is one of the most splendid proofs of his divinity, and nothing was more calculated to excite the hearts and inflame the faith of the disciples, than the majestic and ravishing spectacle of this prodigy. It must, therefore, become more easy to them afterwards, to believe in Jesus Christ, to feed themselves with his remembrance by receiving the pledges of his love, to unite themselves to him in thought, and to embrace him by faith as their Redeemer and God. But in the Catholic dogma of the real manducation, the removal of his person, the absence of his visible and natural body must have been for his disciples a fresh difficulty in believing the mystery, and this is so true, that your theologians rest upon the fact of the ascension as an argument against the real presence, and unceasingly repeat to us that he is as far from our altars as is earth from heaven. They are blind and perceive not, that, contrary to their intention, this reasoning turns precisely to the support of our doctrine, by giving it the very character which Jesus Christ here assigns to it, that of appearing more inconceivable after his ascension.

In announcing to his disciples, he insinuated to them and gave them sufficiently to understand that in the manducation of his flesh there should be nothing for the senses, as they had imagined; and that his presence in it would neither be palpable nor visible, since, according to his natural presence, they would see him disappear and rise up to heaven. He informed them, moreover, that they were not to judge of his body as of other human bodies, incapable of themselves of a similar flight: that his was to be

of a divine nature; his flesh being that of the Son of God, on which he could imprint an all powerful virtue, and which he could easily convert into a supernatural state. I beg you to remark also that he is not satisfied with saying to them that they should see him go up into heaven; but also moreover *go up where he was before*. This he said to convince them of his divinity, wishing to ground upon this transcendant and sovereign motive, the faith which he required of them, and which they refused to his words? Now the figurative sense which you give them is so easy, and so much within the reach of our own ideas, that, in that sense, neither would the disciples have ever refused their assent to it, nor would Jesus Christ have had any need to bring forward his divinity in order to extort their belief. Therefore, this sense absolutely cannot be the sense of his words; the only one it is possible to give them is that of the reality.

Your divines have imagined that the following verse brings to the spiritual and figurative sense the whole previous discourse of our Saviour. You shall decide upon it: 'It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.'¹ We have already proved that the words which Jesus Christ had spoken were decisive for the reality; these therefore cannot give them the figurative sense: for it would be absurd to suppose that our Saviour would teach at the same time, or by turns, in the same discourse and on the same subject, two senses, as opposite as are the reality and the figure. There is also a second and still more forcible proof. If Jesus Christ had concluded by asserting that whatever he had just said must be understood only in a figurative sense, it is evident that both the Jews, who had exclaimed against the real manducation, and the disciples, who had found it too hard to be understood, would immediately have been reconciled to his doctrine, and more tenderly attached than ever to their master. And yet they all left him, even after his last words and walked no more with him.² Their subsequent departure proves, that the disciples discovered in these words no explanation in the

¹ Verse 64. ² Verse 66.

figurative sense, and that our Saviour gave them none of this kind, since his only intention in giving it would have been to disabuse them and retain them about his person.

But if you ask of the signification of these words; ‘the flesh profiteth nothing: it is the spirit that quickeneth;’ I give you that which best agrees with what precedes and follows in the discourse of our Saviour. It is well known that in the scripture language *the flesh* signifies the corporeal senses, or the carnal and corrupted reason of man; while *the spirit* denotes the grace of God, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Thus our Lord said to Peter: ‘Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven.’¹ Thus St. Paul said to the Romans that Christians, ‘walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.’² He details to the Galatians the works of *the flesh* and those of *the spirit*.³ In these and other passages, the spirit and the flesh are taken in the sense that I have explained: they are also taken in the same sense in the verse under examination. Our Lord therefore said, that *the flesh*, that is the senses or corrupt reasons of man profiteth nothing towards the discovery or belief of what he had announced. It is still this reality of manducation on which he has so much insisted, of which he here declares that we cannot judge by *the flesh* or by a carnal reason which profiteth nothing, and that it could neither be discerned nor believed except by the *quickenings spirit*, that is, by the grace and the light of God. Accordingly he immediately adds: ‘But there are some of you who believed not⁴..... therefore did I say unto you, that no man can come unto me, unless it be given him by my Father;’⁵ which very much resembles what he said to Peter, who had just been confessing his divinity: ‘Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven.’ The reason in fact is that faith is a gift of God, and that in order to be more influenced by the proofs on which the credibility of mysteries rest, than by the difficulties that the *senses oppose* to them, we stand in need of succor from

¹ Matth. xvi. 17. ² viii. 4. ³ v. 20. ⁴ St. John, vi. 65. ⁵ vi. 66.

above, of the lights and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.¹ According to the exposition I have just given you, every thing is regular and connected, every thing is consistent in the discourse of our Saviour.

Have you remarked these words: 'Therefore (i. e. because they do not believe) did I say unto you, that no man can come unto me, unless it be given by my Father? That is to say, that there was need of an assistance, a particular grace from heaven for believing the manducation that was announcing. It was not therefore the manducation, that is recognised in your communion, so natural, so conformable to our ideas that it presents not even the shadow of a mystery and requires not for its belief any effort of the mind, and still less any particular assistance of divine grace.

The words which immediately precede, present also a reflection which I must not permit to escape; 'But there are some of you who believe not.' Whence comes this reproach of their incredulity? To what can it refer? Ask your divines, if you please, and you will see their embarrassment, or rather their inability to give any satisfactory reply to your question. At what then were these disciples offended? What was it they refused to believe? It was not any strong expression which our Saviour had made use of; for in that case he would have softened it down: and therefore the reproach of incredulity falls upon the things and not upon the expressions. Neither was it the manducation taken in the figurative sense, a thing too simple to admit of the possibility of a moment's hesitation; it was therefore the reality that they absolutely would not admit. But, in the principles of your divines, that would deserve no reproach. These disciples thought it to be impossible; and do not your brethren think the same? and according to them did not these disciples, by refusing their consent, reject what they ought to have be-

¹ Spiritus est qui vivificat, caro non prodest quidquam: quod indicat ista Spiritus sancti auxilio intelligi oportere. Carnem enim hoc est rationem humanam in hisce divinis rebus nihil prodesse, hoc est caligare et ineptire. *Centur Lutheran.* Cent. 1. c. iv. col. 167.

lieved, by holding it to be impossible? They could not therefore merit any reproach; and Jesus Christ (may he forgive us!) Jesus Christ reproached them without cause.

‘After this many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.’¹ Here ask again the most skilful of your ministers: ask them why these disciples abandon their master? In vain will you expect a solid reply. They will always tell you, and they have nothing more to say, that these disciples had permitted themselves to be staggered at expressions which seemed to them to favor the reality of the manducation, which in point of fact our Saviour had only proposed in figure. But he who saw into the interior, would immediately have seen their mistake, and to remove it he had only to say; ‘When I spoke to you of giving you my flesh to eat, I merely intended to give you the sign and figure of it, and to inform you that by taking them you would unite yourselves to my flesh by faith: and are not you already thus united, you who are my disciples?’ And they would have fallen at his feet and would never have left him. In fact it is ridiculous to explain this fatal separation by a mere misunderstanding of terms. Men, indeed, are liable to this in their mutual communications, because they cannot read each others thoughts; but it is absolutely inadmissible between these disciples and Jesus Christ, who clearly saw whatever was passing in their minds. Consider their departure from Christ: seek out a motive for it as long you please; you will find it only in the incomprehensibility of the mystery. In vain does Jesus Christ remind them of his heavenly mission, of his divinity, and the miracles which attested both: nothing could persuade them. Neither the admiration of his person, nor the works of a power that commands nature, nor the benefits they had received, nor those which they had reason to expect, could make them overcome their repugnance to this real manducation. They obstinately persist in judging of it by *the flesh*, by the corporeal senses, by a confined and corrupted reason: they deem it impossible, and will hear no more of it: they withdraw. Alas! too

¹ Verse 67.

often, since then, has this unhappy separation been renewed in the world! How many children of the Church have been lost through the like repugnance to believe the same mystery! How many left her bosom at the time of the Reformation, and since that epoch, how many were not and still are not reconciled to it, on account of the same difficulty of embracing this incomprehensible dogma. Thus the same effect that it produced at its first announcement in the world; it still continues to produce in our days: the aversion it occasioned in many disciples to Jesus Christ, it still occasions in Christians to his Church.

At the time our Saviour saw himself abandoned by many of his disciples, he perceives his apostles, in suspense perhaps between the authority of their master and the incomprehensibility of his doctrine, humbly maintaining a profound silence. But he, wishing to ensure their attachment and faith, said to the twelve: 'Will you also leave me? And Simon Peter answered him: Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life: we have believed and have known that thou art the Christ the Son of God.'¹ Had the apostles here given, as a motive of their continuance with him, that they had taken the words of Jesus Christ in the figurative sense, and understood that to eat his flesh and drink his blood meant to be intimately united to him by faith, then it would be fair to conclude that the disciples had taken those same words in too literal a sense. But so far are the apostles from expressing any such thing, that it is evident from their answer that they had inferred from them the reality of the manducation, as well as the disciples: but that having more confidence and being less disposed to judge by the *flesh* than by the *spirit*, and corresponding better with grace, they left entirely to our Saviour the manner in which he would accomplish his promise, although they could not conceive or imagine any. They believed what they could not understand but it was what Jesus Christ had positively told them over and over again to believe: they believed because the words of truth and life eternal being in his mouth, he could not himself be deceived,

¹ Verses 68, 69, 70.

nor deceive them : they believed, because they knew him to be the Son of God, the Christ, having power to do beyond what human reason could attain or conceive. These were their motives. Assuredly the easy figurative sense would have required none of this exertion. There was, therefore, something incomprehensible to them in the words of our Saviour : they discovered in them the ineffable mystery that we discover : and the motives upon which they grounded their belief are absolutely the same and the only ones on which the Catholic Church has always rested hers.

Let us, if you please, cast a rapid glance over the arguments we have developed in the examination of this chapter

1. Jesus Christ begins by producing the great motives that are to convince his hearers of the obligations of believing in his words. Therefore he has something to propose to them which will be in itself very difficult to be believed.

2. Jesus Christ comes to the proposal of it, and says that he is the *bread that quickeneth*, that the bread which he will give them to eat, *is his flesh, which he will give for the life of the world*. The Jews take the natural sense of those words, and reject it, because the manducation of his flesh appears to them impossible : therefore they understood his words of a true and real manducation.

3. The carnal manner in which they represented to themselves this manducation, evidently supposes the reality of it, and not less evidently excludes the figure. Then, it was the reality they understood.

4. If they had been mistaken in understanding the reality, our Saviour would have disabused them immediately. But far from disabusing them, by explaining himself in a figurative sense, he resumes what he first proposed, repeats it six times in succession, and always with expressions still stronger for the reality and even with an oath. Therefore he had the reality in view, and in it he required their belief.

5. Many of the disciples take offence at the words they had just heard our Saviour pronounce in six successive verses, and

declare them to be too hard to be borne. Therefore these words conveyed the sense of the reality, incomprehensible to the human mind, and not the figurative sense so conformable to our ideas.

6. Instead of softening down the expressions which alienated the disciples, Jesus Christ declares that if they are scandalized now, they shall soon be scandalized still more when they shall see him going up to where he was before; that is, that his doctrine will then appear to them more incredible than before his ascension. Now the figurative manducation becomes still more easy to believe after his ascension, and the real manducation appears more incredible in consequence. Therefore it is not the former, but the latter which had been announced.

7. Jesus Christ who never reproached his disciples with not having understood the sense of his discourse, reproaches them here for not believing. Now the reproach for not believing can only fall on the reality. Therefore he had announced the reality in his discourse.

8. Jesus reproaches them with not believing in this reality. Therefore they did wrong, and you do still more so, in pronouncing it to be indefensible. The Jews and disciples judged soundly according to you, by deeming this manducation impossible. Therefore your judgment, like that of the Jews and the disciples, is in direct opposition to that of Jesus Christ, and you are all equally condemned together.

9. Jesus declares that no one can believe in him concerning this manducation, if he have not received grace from his Father. Now, to believe a figurative manducation there is no need of any grace, since there is no need of any exertion: therefore he speaks not of that kind of manducation.

10. The doctrine of our Saviour on the manducation is such that it hindered many of the Jews from believing in him, and induced many disciples to abandon him. Now the doctrine of the Catholic Church on this point is also such, that it prevents many Christians from joining its creed, and has induced many of its children to quit it: whereas the doctrine of the reformed, whatever be the strength of the expressions they make use of in

the Lord's Supper, has never engaged any one to quit them, nor prevented any one from joining them. Therefore the doctrine of the reformed upon this manducation has not the characters of the doctrine of our Saviour, whereas that of the Catholic Church has them all; therefore the Catholic faith is the doctrine of our Saviour.

11. The disciples leave their master rather than believe; the apostles adhere to him, grounding their belief on his divinity and his sovereign power. Now the former would never have abandoned such a master for not believing so simple a thing as a figurative manducation, and the latter would have had no need, in order to believe it, to recall to mind his infinite power and his divinity. Therefore neither the one nor the other understood this manducation in a figurative sense: therefore that of the reality is the only sense, which can explain at once the opposite conduct of these disciples and the apostles.

In concluding this article, permit me, Sir, to address to you one final observation. I know not what impression will have been made upon you by this contrast between the apostles on one side, and the Jews and many disciples on the other. Change the times and the names, and you there read the history of the opposition that exists between those of your communion and us. I feel with regret every thing they will find odious in this comparison: I entreat them to pardon me for it: it is even more painful for me to have to tell them hard truths, than for them to hear them: nothing would ever have induced me to do it, but the hope of being serviceable to them, even at the purchase of their displeasure. We must therefore here again open for a moment before you and them the scene at Capharnaum, in order that you may see how strikingly it applies to the supporters of your reformation. They have renewed it, and they copy it daily with so much fidelity that you will see them performing the same characters and the same parts as the Jews and disciples; you will see them borrow their language, imitate their actions; their conduct and carry on the resemblance even to the catastrophe. In fact, when we tell them that Jesus Christ *is the living bread*

*that came down from heaven: that the bread which he gives us to eat is his own flesh, the same that he has given for the life of the world, they rise up against this proposition, which is precisely that which, in the mouth of Jesus Christ, produced the departure of the Jews. Like them they shew a thousand signs of impatience, of disdain, of contempt: they hold us as foolish and absurd, they treat our doctrine as impossible and extravagant, and thus produce again under a thousand insulting forms the rude exclamation of the Jews: 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' In vain do we represent, unless we eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, we shall not have life in us: that his flesh is meat indeed and his blood is drink indeed: that we learn it from him, who was sent by his Father, and who came down from heaven to instruct and save us: that his order is that we all believe in his word, &c.: they still remain as immovable as ever in their past incredulity: they pass over to the disciples and repeat with them and with much more bitterness: *This saying is hard, and who can hear it?* We persevere in our endeavors to soften their inflexibility: we suggest that this mystery is proposed to us by him who is gone up to where he was before: that it is unreasonable to believe in his divinity and not to believe in his doctrine: these proud men listen no more to us: they treat us either with contempt or pity, and the same reason that induced the disciples to leave Christ, induces them also to leave us. Let them boast now of the high antiquity of their principles: they may date them, if they please, from the Christian era: uncontestably they have a right to do so: on this point I recognise them as partisans and associates of the Jews in this gospel, as successors and heirs of the disciples, I mean of those ungrateful and unfortunate disciples, whom the Holy Spirit has marked out to us in scripture as the first apostates from Jesus Christ. Can a man be a Christian, and not blush at such a descent? Can he be a Christian and not tremble at the idea of sharing in the opinions, obstinacy, desertion, and lot of these ancient renegades.*

For your part at least, Sir, reflect, I conjure you, on the danger to which you are exposed by the prejudices of your education.

Have the courage to emancipate yourself from them: it certainly must cost you less to quit an opinion which is not of your own choice. Imagine yourself for a moment in the midst of the synagogue where this important affair was discussed, and that you witness all that passes. You distinguish our divine Saviour surrounded by his apostles and disciples: You attentively listen with them to the words that come from his mouth, and at that part of his discourse where he comes to the mystery, you hear the confused murmurs, and afterwards the declared opposition of the multitude. In vain does our Saviour exert himself to persuade them, by repeatedly affirming what he had just announced; the multitude remain deaf: and soon you remark the repugnance even of many of his disciples, you notice their words of contradiction, and then their entire desertion from him. On the other side you admire the firmness, the liveliness of the faith of the apostles, and what is more striking through the whole of this scene, the calm countenance and unalterable sweetness of the Man-God. All this passes before your eyes; I suppose you to be present at it. Now what are you yourself going to do? you must declare yourself. On what side will you range yourself? will you adhere with them to your divine master? or will you turn your back upon him with the crowd of the murmurers? You are indignant at my question: is there any room for hesitation? You say to me: Well then! Sir, take now the part that you would then decidedly have taken with the apostles. The dispute unfortunately still continues. It has been renewed for nearly three centuries with more violence than at its birth, and with still more deplorable consequences. It is no longer between the Jews and in the synagogue, but in the Church and among Christians: Jesus Christ is still in the midst of them: he continues to speak the same language to them. You have just heard him: surrender yourself therefore to him.

LETTER VII.

The Words of Institution.

THE strange and inconceivable proposition which our Saviour had just made in the synagogue, the disputes and contradiction it had generally excited among the crowd of his hearers, the repeated declarations of Jesus, which instead of quieting their minds and bringing them again to him, provoked the murmurs even of many of his disciples: the formal opposition of the latter, their defection, their desertion, the more successful appeal made to the twelve, their open and declared profession of faith, their persevering fidelity, all these circumstances should give importance and celebrity to the scene at Capharnaum. Those who had been present at it, must have long talked it over together, and likewise have related it to those who were not there; the fugitive disciples particularly, to justify their desertion and apparent ingratitude. It will then have made a noise in the world, as men were often discoursing upon the extraordinary personage who for more than two years had been astonishing Judea by the wisdom of his doctrines, by benefits and prodigies without number. But it is above all in the minds of the apostles and the faithful disciples that it must have left the most profound impressions. Amongst those who had left them, they had to regret the loss of friends and companions, with whom they had hitherto shared their assiduous attention to their gracious master. Without doubt it cost them much at that time to see them no longer by their side: and this striking absence called incessantly to their recollection the cause of their unfortunate separation. This cause itself, so very unexpected, so profoundly mysterious, must have been to them an inexhaustible source of reflection, of conversation, and confidential communications with one another. What then! we are one day destined to receive truly and really his flesh to eat and his blood to drink? Yes, we

are certain of it, because he himself has so strongly assured us of it. But when? How? In what manner? &c. It is natural to think that they must have put to themselves a thousand times these and similar questions upon this astonishing mystery: neither can we refuse to believe that they mutually strengthened one another in the faith that they had already publicly professed, and that they encouraged one another to expel from their minds the various suggestions of the senses; that might present themselves. Let us put ourselves in their place. If at this distance of time, and with the mere reading of it, we are still so struck and confounded at the promise which they heard, we may easily conceive that, if it had been directly and for the first time addressed to us, it would have supplied us with abundant matter for reflection until its accomplishment. It is also to be presumed, I had almost said to be believed, that our Saviour who saw what passed in their heart, would in his goodness have condescended to recur frequently to this subject, and that to the instructions given in the synagogue, he would have added others to confirm them more in their faith, and to recompense the confidence they had so signally displayed in his words. It would be unreasonable to object to me the silence of the evangelists on this subject: we know very well that they have not related the thousandth part of what our Saviour has said. Even by St. John's account, if he had attempted to write the whole, the world would not have contained the books he must have composed. At all events, it is most certain that the apostles implicitly trusted to their Master for the moment in which he would be pleased to fulfil his promise, and that they waited for the accomplishment of it with a confused mixture of sentiments of impatience, inquietude, love, and terror. A whole year passed away in this manner. But the time was nigh at hand, the ministry of Jesus Christ was drawing to a conclusion: and soon does he announce to his disciples his near approaching death. The shorter time he has to spend among them the more does he testify to them his affection: he treats them no more as servants but as friends. No sooner does he see them assembled around the paschal table, than he declares to them

that he had ardently desired to celebrate this last pasch with them before he suffered :¹ and a little after, continuing to announce to them his death, he told them he should no more eat the pasch with them until it should be fulfilled in the kingdom of God ; then taking the chalice, he adds that he will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God should come.² At the conclusion of this legal supper, Jesus rises from table, and to give to his disciples an example of humility and mutual charity, he abases himself so far as to wash their feet. He then invites them to the banquet and again sits down at table with them. What more then, has he to give to them ? It is not the nourishment of their body, that now engages his attention, but that of their soul. The moment was arrived for the accomplishment of his promise : it is just going to take place. Already had he laid upon the bread his venerable and creative hands, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he begins to pray, whether we are to suppose, that the acts of thanksgiving here spoken of by the evangelists passed mentally between him and his Father, or were heard by the guests at table. After having invoked the all-powerful virtue of his Father, he makes it fall upon the bread, by blessing it : he breaks it, and solemnly says to his apostles : ‘Take and eat, this is my body, which is given for you.’ And in the same manner after blessing the chalice, ‘Drink ye all of this (says he) this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for you.’ What were then the sentiments of the apostles, and what ideas must the whole of this ceremony have awakened in their minds ? Who can doubt that what they had heard at Capharnaum was here distinctly brought to their remembrance ? Those words committed to writing so long afterwards by St. John, were therefore still echoing in their ears : ‘The bread that I will give you to eat is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.’ And at the moment our Saviour had said, *this is my body* which is delivered for you, they necessarily saw in these words the accomplishment of the former. The connexion of the actual institution with the promise made by Jesus Christ was so

¹ Luke, xxii. 15. ² Luke, xxii. 16.

manifest, they both accorded and corresponded so exactly in the things and in the terms, that they must evidently have seen that what had been announced to them and what they had been hitherto expecting, was then just accomplished. Hence there is no hesitation, no doubt on their part: no question is proposed: every thing passes in a profound recollection; and the apostles receive from his hand and take with silent adoration, *that flesh which is meat indeed, and that blood which is drink indeed.*¹

The exposition you have just read is sketched from the compared narratives of the evangelists. St. John, who wrote the last of the four, has given us at length the words of the promise, which the three first had omitted, and has dispensed with the repetition of the fact of the institution, described by the others. It is very remarkable that the evangelists relating the same facts at too remote periods to have an understanding with one another, and on that account varying almost always in the circumstances and expressions, all three agree, and St. Paul after them, in relating these words of Jesus Christ: “*This is my body, this is my blood.*” This uniformity, no where else observable, denotes a particular design of the holy Spirit who directed them, viz: that of teaching us still more plainly the essential words of the mystery. Considering them in themselves, it is impossible not to be struck at once with their simplicity and their strength. This

¹ ‘The connexion of the words we read in St. John with those of the institution is visible. There *to eat*, and here *to eat*, there *to drink*, and here *to drink*: there *flesh*; and here *flesh*; or, which amounts to the same, *body*. There *blood*, and here *blood*: there *to eat* and *drink*, the *flesh* and *blood* separately; and here the same thing. If this does not shew distinctly that all this is but one and the same mystery, one and the same truth, there no longer exists such a thing as analogy or agreement: there is no connexion nor consistency in our faith, or in the words and actions of our Saviour. But if the eating and drinking of St. John is the eating and drinking of the institution, then in St. John it is an eating and drinking with the mouth, since it is visibly of such a nature in the institution. If the flesh and blood of which St. John speaks is not the flesh and blood in spirit and in figure, but the true flesh and the true blood, in their proper and natural substance, it is the same in the institution: and we can no more interpret *this is my body, this is my blood*, of a figurative body and figurative blood, than in St. John, *unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood*, of the figure of one or the other of them.’ Bossuet, *Meditations sur l’Evangile*, jour. 33.

great prodigy is expressed by the plainest and simplest words to be found in human language; men would never have discovered such an expression: accordingly it is not from them that proceeds this sublimity of expression, but from him by whom the greatest wonders are as easily produced as spoken. These few words were understood in the sense of the real presence and of transubstantiation by the apostles, and after them by all the Christians till time of Berengarius and Wicklif, whose subtilities for a short time disturbed the Church. It was reserved for the sixteenth century to combat these dogmas more obstinately. And yet even the leader of the reformation could only prevail upon himself to do it by halves. He defended the real presence; and only declared himself against the way in which it was universally understood. He had at first desired, it is true, that some happy expedient might be suggested to him of getting rid of the reality, in order to do more essential injury to the cause of the papacy: a motive which was assuredly most worthy an apostleship like his, and which you might regard as a calumnious imputation on the part of the Catholics, had not Luther himself inserted it in one of his letters.¹ ‘But God, says Bossuet in his usual style, fixes secret boundaries to the wildest minds, and does not always permit innovators to afflict his Church as much as they would wish. Luther remained invincibly struck with the strength and simplicity of these words, *this is my body, this my blood.*’

Carlostadius, archdeacon of Wittemberg, his disciple and partisan, proved a bolder man than his master. He was the first to leap the fence, and deny the real presence. To attack the sense of the reality, in which the words of our Saviour had been understood throughout the world, he bethought himself of explanation, but one so foolish and extravagant that it could

¹ In his letter to the inhabitants of Strasburg, he says that they would have greatly delighted him if they had supplied him with some good reason for denying the real presence, because it would have fallen in better with his design of inconveniencing the papacy: *Sciens hoc maxime modo posse me incommodare papam.* *

* *Epist. ad. Argent. tom. vii. fol. 501, an 1520.*

only have come from a disordered brain. He pretended then, that Jesus Christ when he pronounced the word *this*, did not refer to what he held in his hand, but merely to his own body: and that thus the natural sense of his words was: 'This, that is, my body, is my body.' This unreasonable and ridiculous interpretation put his party too much to the blush not to be immediately abandoned. They preferred giving the honor of the renewal of the sacramentarian doctrine to Zuinglius, the rival and antagonist of Luther, to whom he was a long time a subject of bitter vexation, by obstinately disputing with him the glory of being the first reformer.¹ Already five years had elapsed since Carlostadius had brought his discovery into the world, which paid no attention to it, when Zuinglius, who was held in great repute at Zurich, assembled in that city on the 11th of April, 1525, the famous synod, which adopted his reform. This synod was composed of two hundred citizens, all as able theologians no doubt as one could reasonably expect to be found among the Swiss burgesses in the sixteenth century. Here it was that in the presence of these new fathers of the Church, there arose a regular disputation between Zuinglius and the lay chancellor of the town upon the meaning that was to be given to the words of the Eucharist. Having only to deal with a mere burgess, and possessing likewise more boldness and fluency of language than he, the cure of Notre-Dame-des Ermites demonstrated without difficulty, and to the perfect satisfaction of all these powerfully gifted men, that they ought to acknowledge a figurative sense in the words, *this is my body*, as in the others of the parable, *the field is the world, the seed is the word*. These were the only examples he produced, having nothing better at the time to

¹ Zuinglius had published that, from the year 1516, before the name of Luther was known, he had preached the gospel in Switzerland. Piqued at this his pretension, Luther wrote to the inhabitants of Strasburg, that he confidently assumed to himself the glory of having been the first to preach Jesus Christ, but that Zuinglius wished to rob him of his glory. 'How are we to hold our peace (said he) while these people disturb our Churches, and attack our authority?' He declares, in conclusion, 'that there is no medium: and that he or they must be the ministers of satan.'

produce: for he had not then been favored with the apparition of the black or white personage, who came afterwards to him in a dream, to point out to him a still more analogous passage in the Bible. This council of the burgomaster and burgesses however adopted unanimously his conclusions against the real presence, and from that very day abolished, by a decree, the celebration of mass. Such is the origin of the sacramentarian opinion and of the whole reformation in general at Zurich, where two hundred ignorant laics pronounced sentence against the faith of all ages and the perpetual doctrine of the Church, as if they had been deciding upon some acres of ground, or a few scraps of meadow-land near the borders of the lake. The other towns that afterwards adopted the same principles, imitated the conduct of Zurich, and proceeded just as wisely and canonically in their decisions.

Undoubtedly, Sir, you can have no difficulty in acknowledging the absolute illegality and prodigious temerity, with which the sacramentarian opinion and the reformation were admitted at Zurich and from thence in the other cantons. You will tell me that you are but little concerned with what took place on this subject in the towns of Switzerland, Germany and France: that the Church of England alone has claims to your interest, and that upon the article of the Eucharist the canonical forms have not been laid aside, because the bishops and doctors held a convocation which pronounced, indirectly at least, against the real presence, and most positively against transubstantiation. This observation, I grant, is not devoid of reason; in fact, we perceive in the convocation an appearance of canonical form. This is not the place to expose the too positive defects that nullified all its acts and proceedings: I shall be satisfied with observing, in my turn, that drawing its objections from the holy scriptures as all the reformers did, and none of them having seen or found any thing more than another, it will read its own refutation in that which I am now going to give to every thing that bears the name of reformation, whatever country it may inhabit, or under whatever denomination it may be distinguished.

We will examine the difficulties brought against the real presence, and afterwards those against transubstantiation. It would be useless to treat separately of the adoration, an inevitable consequence of the real presence: for to believe Jesus Christ present in his sacrament, and not to pay to his divine person divine honors, would be an outrage, an impiety, and a kind of apostacy. Have we not learned from St. Paul that even at the name alone of Jesus every knee shall bow, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth?¹

¹ The convocation of 1562, in its twenty-eighth article, under pretence that our Saviour did not ordain that he should be adored in the Eucharist, suppresses and condemns indirectly the adoration we there pay to his divinity. This evidently enough unmasked its secret opinion against the real presence and gave the world to understand that it banished Jesus Christ from its sacrament. To prove this by authorities that it must admit, I will cite those who, like itself, have suppressed the adoration; I mean the Calvinists.

Beza arguing against Luther, who had given full liberty to adore or not to adore, expresses himself as follows: ‘Illud vero præ cæteris demiror qui adorationem illam liberam relinquant, qui tamen Christum reipsa corporaliter, ut in cælis, cum pane adesse, dari et sumi fatearis. Id enim si ita esse crederem, illius profecto non modo tolerabilem et religiosam, sed etiam necessariam arbitrarer adorationem.’*

Another Calvinist refutes the Lutheran doctrine in like manner: ‘Hanc adorationem pontificiam si neges, posita corporali præsentia Christi in pane, crimen impietatis et contumeliæ Christi nec apud papistas, nec apud ullos sanos potes effugere.’ †

The Calvinistic author of the *Caution on the Book of Concord*: ‡ ‘Si Christus in pane eucharistico præsens esset corporaliter, necessario nos ad panem hunc conversos oporteret ipsi reverentiam et adorationem Deo debitam exhibere. Alligata est autem adoratio ad hæc naturam humanam, assumptam a Filio Dei, ut ubicumque vel sensu nostro, vel verbo ipsius constat eum esse præsentem, eo dirigi adorationem et honorem Christi, animo et corpore necesse sit: sicut dictum est: *Adorem eum omnes Angeli Dei.* || Estque fabula impia et in Christum contumeliosa quod aliqui (Lutherani) respondent Christum adesse huic pani, non ut in eo adoretur, sed ut in eo comedatur, neque jussisse ibi se adorari, sed edi. Sufficit enim universale Dei mandatum de adorando Christo, ad asserendum ei summum honorem. Si igitur constaret eum ibi præsentem esse suo corpore, tam non esset nobis expectandum speciale mandatum, de reverentia et honore divino ipsi in hoc pane exhibendo, quam non expectabat, nec expectare debebat Thomas singulare mandatum de adorando Christo, quem videbat ob oculos suos stantem in conclavi,

* *De Cæna Domini*, p. 270. † Balæus in *Examen recit.* p. 220. ‡ Ch. ii. p. 338. || Heb. i. 6.

The Real Presence.

We have already remarked the address of your lords spiritual of 1562 in not only rejecting the real presence, which still had its partisans in this Convocation, and which was afterwards admitted and defended by many doctors of your Church: perhaps I may have occasion farther on to make you acquainted with them. It is nevertheless true, that the Zuinglian and Calvinistic opinions, at last prevail with you to such a degree, that, upon discoursing on this subject in your country, I have often been astonished at persons, otherwise well instructed, when I advanced that the doctrine of the real presence had found most able defenders in the Church of England: I have even been obliged for my justification to produce writings and passages that I had at first cited from memory. Permit me now to ask you, what great discoveries your modern theologians have made in the holy scriptures, to induce them to reject a doctrine as ancient in your country as its conversion to Christianity: to reject the natural sense which is presented to every unprejudiced mind by the words repeated by the three evangelists and by St. Paul, *this is my body*, and according to the Syriac version of St. Mark, *this is my very body*:¹ to reject the only sense which agrees with the discourse of the promise, which most certainly speaks only of the

sed eo agnito, statim sui memor officii, procidens coram eo exclamavit: *Dominus meus et Deus meus*. In regis aut principis conspectum nemo sanus prodit, quin ad illum cenverso vultu reverentiam ipsi debitam exhibeat. Quæ igitur fuerit impietas, si Christus tam proprio nobis assistat corporaliter, ut per manus sacerdotum in ora nostra cum pane se deferri patiatur, non toto animo et corpore ad panem illum converso, divinos honores Christo præstare? Nec obstat quod ibi non cernatur oculis. Si enim verbi ipsius testimonio constaret, eum adesse ibi suo corpore, hoc magis ad credendum et ibi adorandum ipsum nos obligaret, quam testimonium sensus nostri.

Even Chemnitius himself, the disciple of Melancton, found himself obliged to acknowledge that the corporal presence induced the necessity of adoration. 'Nullus est qui dubitet an Christi corpus in cœna sit adorandum, nisi qui cum Sacramentariis aut negat aut dubitat in cœna vere Christum esse presentem.*'

¹Amongst the most judicious critics, some are of opinion that St. Mark himself was the author of this Syriac version, and that he made it for the use of the converted Jews, to whom this language was then natural. Others, among whom is found Walton, the learned bishop of Chester, attribute it to some disciples of

* Examcn conc. Trident. sess. 31. cap. V.

reality, and to substitute in its place one of figure, of representation and of absence, which contradicts the promised manducation of this flesh, which is truly meat, and which was to be given for the life of the world? But in place of discoveries, for no new discovery could be made in writings so well understood and so thoroughly examined before them, they formed their decision upon the same grounds, which the reformers had already produced to give credit to their new interpretation.

These examples and these grounds or reasons shall all be discussed in their turns: and in order that you may judge more correctly of the former, we will here produce some principles admitted by all parties. According to the rules of language there are some things established by use, as signs: there are others on the contrary which are not, and which cannot become signs except by a new and primary establishment of them as such. When signs are established by use, we have a right to suppose that they are known as such by those to whom we speak, and if we discover any perplexity in their mind, it arises from their being unable to ascertain, not what they are in themselves but what they signify: then, by giving to these signs the names of the things signified, the perplexity ceases, and the meaning of the phrase is clearly understood by every one. Thus, when you shew me a collection of pictures, you say: Do you see this portrait? It is the Prince Regent: or it is the Princess Royal. When you direct my observation to geographical maps, you say to me; This is England; This is Scotland: I perfectly understand you, because I know that pictures and maps are established signs: and my only difficulty was to know what they particularly represented. This is not the case with signs that are newly established for the first time. Not being accustomed to regard the apostles. According to the spirit of the original it should be translated: *This is my body, my own body, which is given for you. This is my blood, my own blood.** For it is also for this reason that the Syriac, which is as ancient as the Greek, and which was done in the time of the apostles, reads, *This is my own body; and that in the liturgy of the Greeks it is declared that what is given to us is the very body of Jesus Christ and his very blood.* Bossuet, *Medit. sur l'Évangile*, 22 jour.

* Proleg. Bibl. Polyglot.

the thing you have named to me as a sign, and having been taught to consider it merely according to its natural and essential properties, I cannot understand that which you wish to establish by it, unless you acquaint me with the particular use to which it is destined by you. If you would have me to understand you, you must explain yourself, or let me know that, contrary to the established usage, you have taken it into your head to make a sign of what has hitherto been no such thing. In fact, to return to the portraits and maps we were speaking of, put in my place some uninstructed savage, and in vain would you repeat to him: This is the Regent; This is England: he will understand nothing about it, because, in regard to him, these maps and paintings are signs then for the first time established, which you must explain to him before you make use of them.

The principle naturally applies itself to the point in question. It is plain that before the institution of the Eucharist, it had never been the custom to consider bread as a sign of any thing whatsoever, that it had not been classed among those objects that are ordinarily considered as signs, but in the number of those which are regarded as peculiar and distinct things. Jesus Christ could not employ it to signify his body, unless he then, for the first time, established bread as a sign; and in that case, to make himself understood, to speak according to the rules of language and good sense, he must have explained his intention to the apostles, who could not have the least suspicion of it; but this he in no wise did: or at least he must have previously intimated to them that he should on some future occasion make use of bread to give them a sign of his body; and we do not find that he ever announced any such thing, but rather quite the contrary. It is certain, therefore, that he could not have intended to establish bread as the mere figure of his body, by these most positive terms, *this is my body*, without a previous admonition or an actual explanation, because it would have been the first establishment of this sign, and we only then give to signs the names of the things signified, when they have already been regarded as signs. He, who was true man, spoke according to the language of other

men: He, who was wisdom itself, could no otherwise express himself but in a wise and rational manner; He, who is truth itself, could never express himself in a manner that was deceitful and calculated to lead into error his disciples, to whom he had said: 'The time comes when I will no longer speak to you in parables, but openly:' to whom he then wished to give his last most important instructions: to whom in fine he bequeathed a share in the testament which he instituted for them, on the eve of his separation from them by death.

And if in the course of his ministry Jesus Christ, making use of common metaphors, said to his apostles, *I am the door, I am a vine*; the minds of men were sufficiently prepared for this, and could have found no difficulty but in discovering the immediate purpose, for which he had employed these figurative expressions. It is surprising that any one should have pretended to discover in these expressions any resemblance with the words of the institution, and conclude from these two metaphors that *this is my body* might be explained by *this is the sign of my body*. For 1, It would be necessary at least to suppose that our Saviour, when he said *I am a door, I am a vine*, meant to say that he was the sign or the figure of a door or of a vine, which is perfectly absurd. When he calls himself a door or a vine, it is not that he is the sign or figure of them, but that he possesses qualities of which a door and a vine presented feeble but sensible images. There is then no parity between these examples: they are of two very different kinds.

2. Jesus Christ himself explains what he meant to convey under each of these figures. 'I am the door. By me if a man enter in, he shall be saved: and he shall go in, and go out, and shall find pastures.'¹ And in like manner: 'I am the true vine; and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he will take away: and every one that beareth fruit, he will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me.'²

¹ St. John, x. 9. ² St. John, xv. 1, 2, 3.

3. But if men will draw comparisons from these and other such examples, they must do it in a different way: and, instead of saying, *Jesus Christ is the door or the vine, God the Father is the vine-dresser*, which presents reasonable and very intelligible metaphors on account of the explanation that accompanies them, they must change the sentences as follows: *This door or this vine is Jesus Christ, this vine dresser is God the Father*, Then they would have a grammatical resemblance with *this is my body*: but then also, taken in their isolated state and without previous preparations or explanations, as the words *this is my body* are taken, they would be so ridiculous and extravagant that no sensible person would ever advance such propositions.

How often have the ministers brought forward the words of the parable related in St. Matthew,¹ *the seed is the word of God, and the field is the world!* And because it would admit of none but a figurative sense, they would infer that the words of this eucharistic institution must also be susceptible of it. And they see not the erroneous difference between them! We must therefore place it before their eyes. Who does not know that a parable is a sort of enigma, in which words are employed to convey a meaning different from that which they seem to present, and in which every person seeks for the meaning concealed under the expressions, because he is well aware that there must be one there, even before he has discovered it? The apostles having in vain endeavored to penetrate into it, besought our Saviour to inform them: 'Explain to us, said they, the parable of the cockle of the field.' Jesus seeing that all their anxiety was to know the signification of this parable, answered them very naturally: 'He that soweth the good seed, is the son of man, and the field is the world. And the good seed are the children of the kingdom, and the cockle are the children of the wicked one, and the enemy that sowed them is the devil. But the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels.' Jesus answered according to the wishes of the apostles: They had asked him merely to know the meaning concealed under the terms

¹ Ch. xiii.

which they knew to be but signs, but the signification of which they could not discover. They perfectly understood it, as soon as Jesus Christ had joined to the signs the name of the things signified.

But suppress the parable: imagine Jesus Christ in the open fields with his disciples, and shewing them the reapers at their work. In this case, it is evident that he could not have said to them, *these are angels*, merely to signify that they represented angels. Upon this M. Nicole argues as follows: To say in the explanation of a parable that reapers are angels, is speaking reasonably: but to say out of a parable and when reapers are not considered as signs, but as men, that they are angels, in order to indicate that they represent angels, is a proposition most absurd and contrary to common sense. Now the proposition *this is my body*, taken in the calvinistic sense, is not like the proposition, *these reapers are angels* considered in a parable, but out of a parable. Then it is not like it, except when it must be considered absurd and contrary to common sense.

There is quite as little solidity and analogy in the example of the paschal lamb, become so celebrated by the manner in which Zuinglius affirms that it was revealed to him in a dream, after he had wasted full five years in vainly opposing the real presence. He could not say for certain, whether the spirit which had acquainted him with this example was black or white. Black in my opinion, and most decidedly so: for the absurdity of his revelation could proceed from nothing else than a spirit of darkness. I expect you will soon be of my opinion on this point. You will see that the example adduced by the nocturnal phantom neither requires nor forms any figure: and that, should we even make a concession of this, no inference could thence be drawn against the natural and simple sense of the words, *this is my body*.

1. The example is drawn from a chapter of Exodus, where, after having regulated the manner in which the paschal lamb was to be chosen and immolated, and in which the houses were to be sprinkled with its blood, the Lord adds: 'And thus you

shall eat it: you shall gird your reins, and you shall have shoes on your feet, holding staves in your hands, and you shall eat in haste: for it is the Phase (that is the passage) of the Lord. And I will pass through the land of Egypt that night and will kill every first born.¹ There is nothing said here to make the lamb the sign of the passover: every thing points to the time when the Lord was to pass. Be ready to go out of Egypt, and equipped for your journey: make haste to eat the paschal lamb, and lose no time, for the Lord is going to pass. Such is the sense that these words naturally present: *for it is the Phase (that is the Passage) of the Lord.* What immediately follows confirms this: 'and I will pass through the land of Egypt that night,' adds the Lord. It was then the moment of his approaching and immediate passage that was indicated by the word, *for it is the passage of the Lord,* which also is given to the Israelites as a motive and a reason for the command given to them that they must keep themselves in readiness to depart and eat in haste. And in fact, the passage of the Lord was to be their signal for departure. Moreover, when Moses speaks of the lamb, he calls it neither passage nor sign of the passage, but the victim of the passage. It is to celebrate this event that the lamb is to be immolated: it is to perpetuate the remembrance of this famous epoch of their deliverance, that they are commanded to sacrifice the paschal lamb every year, and to reply to their children when they should ask them the meaning of this sacrifice: 'It is the victim of the passage of the Lord, when he passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, striking the Egyptians and saving our houses.' After this explanation given us by the sacred text in the same chapter, on what ground would the ministers oblige us to receive a different explanation, and compel us to believe upon their interpretation, that the lamb is the sign of the passage, when the Holy Spirit assures us that it is the victim of the passage? The words objected to us do not refer to the lamb, but to the preparations commanded for their journey and to the quick despatch of their repast. They were all to be equip-

¹ Exodus, xii. 2.

ped for their journey, and eat in haste : and why ? because the Lord is going to pass. In all this there is no occasion for sign or figure : every thing is taken literally and is wonderfully clear. There can be conceived no subject for Zuinglius's extravagant triumph in this discovery : it would appear that his black spirit turned his brain, and cast him into a perpetual delirium and absurdity.

2. And should we even be so indulgent to Zuinglius and his phantom, and also his numerous followers, as to grant that the text in question refers to the lamb, and that we must in consequence explain these words, *it is the passage of the Lord*, by, *it is the sign of the passage of the Lord*, what could they thence infer ? Let them keep in mind the general principle, that the name of the thing signified may be given to the sign, when we see in the minds of others that they regard it as a sign, and are only at a loss to understand what it signifies : but that it is never lawful to do so, when there is no reason to suppose this disposition in those to whom we speak. This is the principle : now for the application. God commands them to take a lamb without blemish, a male, and one year old, to keep it four days, to immolate it at the end of the fourth day, to sprinkle with its blood the outsides of the doors, to eat it roasted, to consume it entirely without reserving any thing for the next day, to eat it with bitter herbs, in the dress of travelers, with their reins girt, their shoes on their feet, and staves in their hands. What is the meaning of this display of strange ceremonies, this detail of extraordinary circumstances ? What mean all these preparations ? and why is this lamb commanded to be eaten in so mysterious a manner ? There was no Israelite but must have put similar questions, and must have found the reply in these words : *it is the passage of the Lord*. If these words were by them applied to the lamb, they must then have understood without difficulty that the lamb was the sign of this passage, because so great a number of strange and most unusual ceremonies had prepared them to regard it as a mysterious and significative object. But the bread had not been regarded as a sign, as an emblematical and mysterious ob-

ject : no anterior circumstance, no actual explication, no word of our Saviour tended to make the bread, which he held in his hand, be considered, as the matter of which he was going to make a sign. The apostles had clearly understood their master to speak of a particular bread upon some solemn occasion, and no doubt had taken care not to lose the remembrance of it : but this bread which he had promised them, had not been announced either as a sign, or as a figure : it was to be flesh, and flesh that would be meat indeed, flesh that must be eaten to obtain eternal life ; in fine, that very flesh which would be also delivered up for the life of the world. It is not likely that with such ideas, and such instructions imprinted on their minds, the apostles, upon hearing these positive words solemnly articulated, *this is my body*, should have imagined that they signified, *this is the sign of my body*. In truth, it is offering too great an insult to the word and to one's self to advance such chimeras as these, and to give them admittance into one's mind : and it is being too blind or too obstinate, not to see and not to acknowledge the essential difference that exists between the examples that they would fain compare together, and not to be feelingly convinced that what renders the figure admissible in that of Exodus, renders it, in that of the Gospel, inadmissible and unreasonable.

Let us pass from the examples to the arguments that our adversaries draw from scripture for the support of their opinion. The most specious, the only one in fact that deserves to be seriously examined, is that which seems to be favored by the words, that immediately follow the words of institution. We learn from St. Luke, that our Saviour after having said : *Take and eat, this is my body*, added ; Do this for a commemoration of me. They will have these last words to be an explanation of those that precede : and because, according to our adversaries, the remembrance can only be of things absent, we cannot suppose Jesus Christ to be present in the Eucharist, because, if he were really there, he would not have ordained it as a memorial and in remembrance of his person. You, Sir, as well as myself, must have heard this argument a thousand times ; it is in all the books of your reformed

theologians, and in the mouth of the most ordinary laics. Whatever color and whatever likelihood it may appear to borrow from scripture, you will soon, I trust, judge of it in a different manner, when you have read the following reasons.

1. It is a fact that none of the fathers, none of the ecclesiastical writers have ever seen in these words the sense which the Calvinists have discovered in them. It is a fact again that none of those who first broached the doctrine of the figurative presence were led to do so by these words, *Do this for a commemoration of me*. Zuinglius, who must have had them a hundred times under his eyes, and who went every where in search of the figure, was unable to discover it there. He was taught to discover this precious pearl, as he himself calls it, only from the letter of a Dutchman, and to defend it in a way that seemed to him victorious, only by the revelation of a nocturnal phantom. But this figurative sense being once discovered and established, they thought it advisable, in order to give it consistency, to invent a necessary relation between the words of the institution and those immediately following, regard these latter as the explication of the former, and, by favor of an induction from one to the other, to find the so much desired figure even in the words of Jesus Christ. But what will for ever demonstrate that this combination of connexion and dependance between these words derives its origin from prepossession, and not from the text, is the fact of its remaining so long a time unknown in the world. Indeed it not only escaped the observation of all the Christians during a long succession of ages, but even of the innovators themselves, who had the greatest interest in discovering it: they themselves only adopted it, as an after thought; and it is not by this pretended necessary relation that they arrived at the figure, but from the figurative sense they passed to this new and arbitrary supposition.

2. If the words, *do this for a commemoration of me*, are necessarily explanatory of the preceding ones, *this is my body*, and if from the reality they lead us to the figure, we must say that our Saviour wished to imitate the wanton jokes of certain

persons who begin by announcing something very extraordinary, and conclude by giving it a most simple and natural turn. This way of acting may not be misplaced in company; it may, in our conversations, have its point and agreeableness, by the surprise which it occasions at first, and by the pleasure that it afterwards produces by an unexpected explanation, which draws the minds of our hearers from a perplexity that till then had held them in suspense. But to impute to our Saviour any thing of this kind approaches to blasphemy. This kind of conversation is totally opposite to the Gospel in general, and above all to that imposing gravity which should characterize the last supper, so near his passion, and so filled with thoughts of death: in fine it is totally inconsistent with the well-known character of the God-man, of whom it is not written that he ever was heard to indulge in a joke, or that he was ever even seen to laugh.

3. If the words *this is my body* convey in their insulated state and of themselves the sense of the reality, and if they are determined to that of the figure merely by the following words, *do this for a commemoration of me*, it follows that these latter are, of absolute necessity, the explanation of the former, and that they must not be separated from one another, for if the latter were suppressed, we should be necessarily obliged to admit the sense of the reality, which, in my present supposition, is that which Jesus Christ wished to exclude by adding: *Do this for a commemoration of me*. It is evident therefore that, in this hypothesis, it cannot be right, without contradicting the end and design of our Saviour, to relate the first words without the second. And yet St. Matthew and St. Mark, the two first evangelists, and for many years the only ones, passed over the second in silence. They did not deem them necessary: they did not consider them as explanatory of the preceding ones: and therefore they did not discover between them that connexion, that essential dependence, which your friends have since invented.

4. To come to the bottom of their argument, I observe that it goes upon the principle that a memorial supposes an absence, and that consequently if Jesus Christ were present in the Eucha-

rist, he would not command that they should there bear him in remembrance. Now this principle, specious as it may appear, I hesitate not to pronounce absolutely false. I know that remembrance is generally applied to things absent: you will nevertheless agree with me that it is not opposed to absence, but to forgetfulness, and that it is very proper that we should be admonished to keep in mind what we might forget. Now there are many things present that we are liable to forget, because their presence is not sensible to us, and does not strike our eyes. Do we not forget God and the guardian angels? do we not forget our souls, &c.? The presence of these objects is most certain, but not being sensible, we are but too apt to forget them, and we have sufficient reasons to recall them to our remembrance. Well: the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is of this kind; real but not sensible. He might therefore very justly say to us, remember me when you take my body: because being invisible to our senses, his body is only present to our faith.

5. As for the rest, Sir, I have gone into this detail for no other purpose than to convince you that there is no solidity in these so often refuted arguments, and that they can be supported on no side, the principle falling together with its consequences. You know however that the figurists of all countries place all their reliance upon it, and that this memorial ordained by our Saviour is the ground of their doctrine, the entrenchment where they think they are in safety. Now that you see the weakness of all its parts, would you wish to know the true and just signification of these words, *do this for a commemoration of me?* it is not difficult to discover it: you must begin by ridding yourself of this essential connexion of which you have so often heard but with which neither St. Matthew, nor St. Mark nor any of the bishops or doctors of the Church were acquainted; and which was only taken up as an after-thought by those who renewed the doctrine of the figurative sense. These two passages, *this is my body; do this for a commemoration of me*, are independent of one another, and have each of them a separate, a peculiar and distinct sense. The first gives the reality, the second supposes,

rather than destroys it. The one is a proposition declaratory of what is presented—the body of Jesus Christ; the other, a precept as to the spirit and disposition in which we ought to receive it, that is, as we learn from St. Paul, by remembering that he was delivered up and that he suffered for us: ‘For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord.’¹ Jesus Christ was desirous that our thoughts and our hearts should be fixed upon his passion, at the time of our receiving his adorable body. Of all the benefits conferred upon us, that which he wishes us to reflect upon the most and to choose by preference, is his death, that is, the pledge of our redemption, the only hope of our salvation, the most heroic act of his love for us, as being the dart best calculated to inflame our souls at the moment of our approaching his sacred table.

Thus, Sir, although a memorial need not suppose absence, it is nevertheless true to say that the object of our remembrance in this great act of religion is not present in the Eucharist: for this object, which the memorial is to bring to our mind, is the death of our Saviour, merely represented to us by the separation of his body under the appearance of bread, and of his blood under that of wine. It might seem that the Eucharist being a memorial of his death ought to be preceded by it. But no, it is for men, whose knowledge and foresight are uncertain, to permit things to happen, before they command others to keep them in remembrance.² The command to shew forth the death of the Lord, belonging to the very institution of the mystery, there is no doubt that at the first Lord’s supper it was complied with by the apostles. They shew forth by the anticipation of one day that passion which all Christian ages have since shewn forth by commemoration: and it is most evident that a duty practised by the apostles, in the presence of Jesus Christ living and speaking before them, can never become for us a proof of his absence.

In general all the objection we have just seen, and those lesser ones, which we have suppressed, that we may not stretch out the

¹1. Cor. xv. 26. ²Bossuet.

dissertation into a volume, tend equally to convince us that the Eucharist presents not really the body, but merely the figure of the body. Observe that from all these objections it would result that Jesus Christ must be made to say precisely the contrary to what he did say: for if he has only left us the figure, it follows that what he said was his body is not so, and what he said was his blood is not so, since the sign is not the object itself, but only the representation of it. Therefore, instead of the positive words that came from his mouth *this is my body, this is my blood*, he must be made to say, at least equivalently, *this is not my body, this is not my blood*; for it is only the figure of them.

Moreover our Saviour knew that the apostles would not speak of figure either in their writings or in their discourses: that upon the faith of their word written and unwritten, the Christians would enter into the sense of the reality: he knew also that in the course of ages a time would come when a great number would rise up against this hitherto universal doctrine: he saw the actual separation that this produced or at least strengthened; he heard the quarrels and disputes which so miserably divide us: he heard some bring forward reason and the senses against his words, maintain that the Eucharistic bread could be nothing but the figure of his body, others, establishing themselves upon these same words, maintain that it was his true and real body: and in spite of this foreknowledge, in spite of the different interpretations he hears given to his expressions, and of all the evils derived from them, he permits that all the sacred writers whom he inspires should always speak of *his body* and never of the figure of his body. Can any thing be so strange and incomprehensible as this conduct of our Saviour? Where could be his goodness, his justice, and his tenderness for his Church? and would he not have led us himself astray, if these words, *flesh meat indeed, blood drink indeed, blood drink indeed, body, blood of Jesus Christ*, which we read in his Testament, were only to express error, while the words *sign and figure*, which are read nowhere, were alone to open to us the true sense of the revelation?

I remark another singularity quite as striking in your teachers

One of the principles they are for ever bringing forward, and the one on which the reformation has been erected, is that we cannot be obliged to believe or practice any thing but what is contained in the scriptures or clearly deduced therefrom. We have just seen that there does not exist a single passage in the holy scriptures, which even authorizes the figure, far from demonstrating it: it cannot therefore be deduced from it; much less can it be read there: for the word figure is no where read with the Eucharist. St. John, in the discourse of the promise, always announces a real manducation, flesh to be eaten that was meat indeed, blood to be drunk that was drink indeed, the flesh which was to be delivered, the blood which was to be shed: the three evangelists relating the fulfillment of the promise, speak of the body that is delivered, of the blood that is shed. St. Paul repeats the same words, according to the immediate revelation he had received from our Saviour. The word figure is no where heard: but every thing re-echoes with the words, *body of Jesus Christ, blood of Jesus Christ*: it is Jesus Christ whom we receive, his body of which we participate: it is of his body and blood we render ourselves guilty by an unworthy participation. What therefore becomes now of the grand principle of your reformation? and by what forgetfulness, or rather by what a contradiction do your reformers persist so obstinately in rejecting the body and the blood, of which the scripture is always speaking, to admit a sign, a figure, which is no where to be found therein?

Thanks to divine Providence, the doctrine of the reality has been preserved and always defended in the most considerable society of protestantism. Luther, which it acknowledges as its head, and from whom it boasts to derive its name, never shewed to greater advantage the strength of mind and vehemence of language which he joined to a turbulent and impetuous temper, than in the defence of the literal sense against the new sacramentarians. He could not help paying a tribute of honor to himself on this score, with a modesty of which you shall be the judge: 'The papists themselves are obliged to give me the praise of having defended better than they the doctrine of the literal sense. And

I am certain were they all melted up together, they would not be able to support it as forcibly as I do.¹ Luther was mistaken, as we shall see in the following article: it is certain, however, that he remained constantly attached to the literal sense, and that the sacramentarians, unable to soften the inflexibility of his principles, have often been constrained to come nearer to them and to affect his language in the agreements they attempted to make with him at Wittenberg and at Smalkald.²

But I will now present you with a confession of faith that shall exceedingly surprise you: you are about to hear the Calvinists express themselves as forcibly as the Lutherans and the Catholics on the real presence: and one might take them to be zealous defenders of it, if we knew nothing of their variations. Beza and Farel,³ were charged by the reformed Churches of France to carry it to Worms, where the states of the confession of Augsburgh were assembled. It is there said, 'that in the Lord's

¹ Ap. Hosp. epist. Luth. ad. an 1534.

² These agreements, in which sincerity had less to do than policy, could not be of long duration, and Luther again commenced with increased fury his old abusive attacks upon them. He treated them in his *Short Confession of Faith* 'as fools, blasphemers, a worthless tribe, damned wretches, for whom it was not lawful to pray.' He there protested that 'he would have no communication with them either by letter, by words, or by works, if they did not acknowledge that the Eucharistic bread was the true natural body of our Lord. . . . It is as indifferent to me (said he again,) whether I am praised or blamed by the the frantic Zuinglians or other such people, as it is to be praised or blamed by the Turk, the Pope, or by all the devils: for being near unto death, I am desirous of carrying this glory and this testimony to the tribunal of Jesus Christ, that I have with my whole heart condemned Carlostadius, Zuinglius, Ecolampadius, and other fanatical enemies of the sacrament, together with all their disciples who are at Zurich: and every day in our discourses do we condemn their heresy full of blasphemies and impostures.' Upon this the Swiss warmly retorted. They issued out against him a manifesto, in which they told him in plain terms, 'that he was nothing but an old fool: that men must be as mad as himself to endure his angry effusions; that he dishonored his old age: that he rendered himself contemptible by his violent conduct: and that he ought to be ashamed to fill his books with so much abusive language and so many devils.' Indeed Luther had taken care to put the devil within and without, above and below, before and behind the Zuinglians, by inventing new phrases to penetrate them with demons, and repeating this odious word till men were filled with horror, as Bossuet observes on this passage.

³ Hospine. ad. an. 1557.

Supper are received not only the benefits of Jesus Christ, but his substance even and his own flesh: that the body of the Son of God is not proposed to use in it in figure only and by signification symbolically as a memorial of Jesus Christ absent, but that he is truly and really made present with the symbols, which are not simple signs. And if we add (said they), that the manner in which this body is given to us is symbolical and sacramental, it is not that it is merely figurative, but because, under the species of visible things, God offers us, gives us, and makes present for us, together with the symbols, that which is there signified to us. 'This we say, in order that it may appear that we retain in the Lord's Supper the presence of the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, and that if there remain any dispute, it will no longer refer to any thing but the manner.' Let people hold to this declaration, and disputes would easily be terminated. But why should I thus accumulate foreign authorities, while I can shew the same doctrines to have been supported in your country, by the most distinguished members of your Church, particularly in the reigns of Elizabeth, James, and Charles, I. ? 'You and I,'¹ said Bishop Ridley, in the reign of Edward VI. to the Catholics, 'agree in this, that in the sacrament is the very true and *natural* body and blood of *Jesus Christ*, even that which was born of the Virgin Mary, which ascended into heaven, which sits on the right hand of God the Father, &c., we only differ in the way and manner of being there.'

Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, says that they, who in his time, held different opinions respecting the sacrament, were still found to accord in one; for 'They grant (says he), that these holy mysteries received in due manner, do instrumentally both make us partakers of the grace of that body and blood, which were given for the life of the world; and besides also impart unto us, even in a true and real, though mystical manner, the very person of our Lord himself, whole perfect, and entire.'²

¹ Ridley's Confession, as related in the acts and Monuments of John Fox, p. 159, &c. ² Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Book v. sec. 67. p. 360. London 1617.

‘We believe, no less than you, in a true presence,’ said James I and Bishop Andrews.¹

The same was said by Casaubon in his letter written by order of the King to the Cardinal du Peron.

We will now hear Bishop Montague on this subject. The contents of Chapter XXX. of his appeal are as follows. ‘A *real presence* maintained by us. The difference betwixt us, and the Popish writers is only about the *Modus*, the *manner* of Christ’s *presence* in the Blessed Sacrament. Agreement likely to be made, but for the *factious* and unquiet spirits on both sides. *Beati Pacifici.*’ In the body of the chapter is the following passage. ‘Concerning this point I said, and say so still, that if men were disposed, as they ought, unto peace, there need be no difference. And I added a reason, which I repeat again here: the disagreement is only in *De modo presentiae* (the manner of the presence). The thing is yielded to on either side, that there is in the holy Eucharist a real presence.’²

Another of your Bishops exclaims:³ ‘God forbid, we should deny, that the flesh and blood of Christ, are truly present, and truly received of the faithful at the Lord’s table. It is the doctrine that we teach others, and comfort ourselves withal.’⁴

In the explication of this question and the manner of the real presence it is much insisted upon, that it be inquired, whether, when we say that we believe Christ’s body to be *really* in the Sacrament, we mean *that body, that flesh that was born of the Virgin Mary*, that was crucified, dead and buried. I answer that I know none else that he had or hath: there is but one body of Christ natural and glorified: but he that says that body is glorified which was crucified says it is the same body, but not after the same manner: and so it is in the Sacrament; we eat and drink the body and blood of Christ that was broken and poured forth: for there is no other body, no other blood of Christ: but though it is the same we eat and drink yet it is in another

¹ Resp. ad. Apol. Card. Bellarm. c. ii. p. 2. ² An Appeal to Caesar, ch. xxx. p. 288, 289. London, 1625. ³ Bishop Bilson. ⁴ Bishop Taylor on the real presence in his ‘Collection of Polemical Discourses New and Old.’ p. 185, 186. Third edit. London, 1674.

manner.....They that do not confess the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour, which flesh suffered for us, let them be anathema: for sure it is, as sure as Christ is true.'¹

'The doctrine of those Protestants seems most safe, and true, who are of opinion, nay most firmly believe, the body and blood of Christ to be truly and really, and substantially present in the Eucharist and to be received by the faithful; but that the manner of his being there, is incomprehensible in respect to human reason and ineffable; is known to God, and not revealed in the Scriptures.'²

'Of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist none of the Protestant Churches entertain a doubt.'³ In pages 10 and 11 he cites the passage adduced above of Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, and also asserts that Bishop Pointet one of his successors clearly shews in his *Dialecticon*, that the Eucharist is not merely the figure of our Lord's body, but also contains its true and real nature and substance, he then quotes these words of Antonius de Dominis; 'I have no doubt that all, who believe the gospel will acknowledge that in the holy communion we receive the true, real and substantial nature of Christ.'⁴ Cosin adduces also the testimony of the Saxon confession and of the Synod of Sandomir, and even that of Bucer, who said that 'the true body and true blood of Christ are exhibited and received together with the visible signs of bread and wine.'

Read also again the little Catechism that your Church requires to be learned by those whom she is preparing for confirmation: when asked; 'What is the inward part or thing signified?' it is replied: 'The body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.'

Not to mention the learned Jeremy Collier, who lost his situation for refusing to take the test oath and who published his reason for his refusal: nor Samuel Parker, bishop of Oxford, who would have procured the abrogation of the test act if the people

¹ Ib. p. 256. ² Forbes De Eucharistia, L. I. c. 1. sec. 7. ³ Cosin. *Hist. Trans.* cap. II. par. 1. p. 6. London, 1675. ⁴ Antom. de Dom. De Rep. Eccles. L. F. No. 169.

of his time could have understood and tasted the truth, that he developed with as much strength as erudition: the two bishops whose learning and reputation procured for them the honor of being consulted by the Duchess of York before her conversion, gave her clearly enough to understand that they themselves recognised the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.¹ In fine, Sir, after all the proofs I have just laid before you in this letter, what ought to surprise you is, not the reckoning amongst your able theologians zealous defenders of the real presence, but the finding that there are afterwards to be discovered so many others who have rejected and combated a mystery, so positively and so certainly revealed in the scriptures, and against which there cannot be reasonably brought a single passage of the sacred books. You are now in a condition to judge of it by our answers to their difficulties, and the proofs that will be eternally established in favor of the real presence, both by the words of the promise and of the institution.

Transubstantiation.

WE have shown, against the reformed Zuinglians, Calvinists or Anglicans, that a figurative sense cannot be given to the words, *this is my body*. We are now going to shew against the Lutherans, that the literal sense that must there be admitted, and which they admit with us, necessarily conducts to the dogmas of transubstantiation. This word, which is not in scripture, but which the Church has adopted to give its doctrine with more precision, expresses the change of the substance of bread into the substance of the body of Jesus Christ. Now the literal sense most necessarily supposes this change. In fact, what our Saviour blesses and distributes to his apostles, he assures them, when giving it to them, that it is his body. Before, it was visibly bread and nothing else: actually, after his assertion, it is his body. A change therefore, has taken place; for no substance whatever can at one and the same time remain what it is, and

¹ See the Declaration of the Duchess of York.

become another, because then it would be and would not be itself at the same time: it would be itself, having remained what it was: it would not be itself, having become something else, which is evidently absurd.

Will it be said, with Luther, that the bread having undergone no change, the body is come to be joined, or united to it? In that case, the words of our Saviour are changed; and his proposition amounts to one or other of these two, *this is at once bread and my body*, or *this bread is also my body*. The literal sense of the words is manifestly abandoned by explaining them in this manner, or rather the words are not explained at all, but others are substituted in their place. Who in fact does not see that, *this is my body*, and *this bread is also my body*, are two different propositions? Moreover this latter is in every respect opposed to the grammatical expression of the phrase. Our Saviour did not say, *this bread*, but *this*, employing an indefinite term, a demonstrative neuter pronoun, which interpreters render by *hoc*. Now the neuter pronoun cannot refer to bread, which is of another gender; it must then refer to the body, or be taken in general to denote indistinctly the object that our Saviour was holding in his hand: and then the literal sense is, *this*, that is to say what I hold in my hand, *is my body*, but in no wise *this bread is my body*. The rules of grammar could not permit it neither does good sense admit of it: for bread, remaining such cannot be the body: it is one or the other, but not both one and the other at once: there is therefore necessarily a change of the bread into the body, that these words, *this is my body* may be found true to the letter. Again, the words of institution are explicit on the subject; 'He took bread says St. Paul,¹ and giving thanks broke and said: 'Take ye and eat, *this is my body, which shall be delivered for you;*' and St. Matthew:² 'Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for you.'³ Jesus Christ gives to his apostles the body *which was*

¹ I. Corinth. xi. 21. ² xxvi. 26, 27.

³ These words addressed exclusively to the apostles and their successors, could never establish for all the faithful the divine precept of communion under both

going to be delivered, the blood, which was going to be shed: and most certainly there was no mixture of bread in the body that was going to be delivered.

The Calvinists have perceived this as well as ourselves. They have felt the necessity of a change in the bread: but this change, according to them, is not real; it is only moral. For them, from ordinary aliment, the bread becomes the figure of the body, and the words signify, *this is the figure of my body*. This opinion is absolutely inadmissible as we have proved in the first part, and the Lutherans join with us in shewing them that they must absolutely adhere to the literal sense. In their turn the Calvinists here unite with us against the Lutherans, and demonstrate to them that their defending the literal sense must lead them to transubstantiation, and to acknowledge that dogma of the Catholic Church. As they borrow from her the arguments they employ against the Lutherans on this question I will press them into my service for the purpose of laying those arguments before you. Our proofs may perhaps appear stronger to you when coming from their mouths. At least, by bringing them on the stage one after another, you will find it more singular and striking to hear the Calvinists prove to the Lutherans the Catholic dogma.

Let us produce first the great enemy of the real presence. Zuinglius speaks out plain upon this point in his reply to Billianus: ‘Certainly (says he)¹ if we take the word *is* in its literal signification, those who follow the Pope are right, and we must believe that the bread is flesh.’ That is to say, according to Zuinglus, the simple and literal sense of these words, *this is my body*, necessarily includes transubstantiation. He has recourse to the same argument in his treatise on the Lord’s Supper.² If kinds. It might be collected more speciously from the vi. chapter of St. John. But 1, when we have proved that Jesus Christ is entirely under each kind, we receive him entirely under that of bread: and then it is true to say: ‘Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you shall not have life eternal in you;’ for in eating the body, we drink also the blood. 2. Jesus Christ seems to inform us of this in this very discourse. He says, verse 52, ‘If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever,’ and verse 59, ‘he that eateth this bread shall live for ever,’ where we see the promise of eternal life attached to the manducation of bread alone, that is of the body.

¹ Fol. 261. ² Fol. 275.

we explain without figure the word *is*, in the 'sentence *this is my body*, it is impossible that the substance of bread should not be changed into the substance of the body of Jesus Christ, and that, thus what before was bread is no longer bread. *Fieri nequit quin panis substantia in sipam carnis substantiam convertatur. Panis ergo amplius non est, qui antea panis erat.*' He expresses himself moreover in the same manner, in a work against Luther: 'If the word *this* marks the bread, and no figure can be tolerated in these words, it follows that the bread becomes the body of Jesus Christ, and that what was bread, on a sudden is made the body of Jesus Christ. *Jam panis transit in corpus Christi, et est corpus subito, quod jam panis erat.*'¹ He had said to him a little before: 'If you obstinately persist in not receiving the figure, it follows that the Pope is right in saying that the bread is changed into the body of Jesus Christ.'

Beza maintains against the Lutherans in the conference of Monbelliard, that of the two explications which confine themselves to the literal sense 'that of the Catholics departs less from the words of institution, if they are to be expounded word for word.'² And he proves it thus: 'the advocates for transubstantiation say, that, by virtue of these divine words, what before was bread, having changed its substance, becomes instantly the very body of Jesus Christ, in order that the proposition *this is my body* may thus be correct: whereas the exposition of the advocates for consubstantiation saying that the words *this is my body*, signify my body is essentially, *within, with, or under this bread*, does not declare what the bread has become, nor what it is that is the body, but merely where the body is.' This proof is striking and decisive. For Jesus Christ, when he says *this is my body*, declares that such an object is his body, whereas in Luther's explication he declares where his body is, within, with, or under the bread; but in no wise what his body is. 'It is clear (observes Bossuet on this passage) that Jesus Christ having taken bread to make something of it, was bound to declare to us

¹ *Ezeg* against Luther, p. 336. ² *Conferences de Montobel*, Geneva, 1587, p. 49.

what it was he wished to make it: and it is not less evident that this bread became what the Almighty wished it to be made. Now these words shew that he wished to make it his body, in whatever manner it may be understood: because he said *this is my body*. If then this bread did not become his body in figure, it became so in effect: and we must necessarily admit either the change in figure or the change in substance. Thus by merely attending with simplicity to the word of Jesus Christ, we must pass to the doctrine of the Church; and Beza is right in saying that it has fewer inconveniences, as far as relates to the manner of speaking, than that of the Lutherans, that is, the literal sense is better preserved by it.¹

Hospinian every where makes the same acknowledgment, as when he says, in refuting a work of Luther's: If we must exclude all figure from the words of Jesus Christ, the opinion of those who follow the Pope is correct.² The same author, as well as other defenders of the figurative sense, remark with much correctness against Luther, that Jesus Christ did not say *my body is here*, or *my body is under this and with this*: or, this contains my body; but simply, *this is my body*. Whence it follows that he in no wise wished to give his disciples a substance which contains or accompanies his body, but his body without mixture of any foreign substance.³

Calvin frequently insists upon this same truth;³ but not to dwell too long upon particular authorities, let us listen to an entire synod of Zuinglius: that of Czeuger in Poland, related in the Geneva collection. This synod demonstrates that the consecration of Lutherans is indefensible, 'because, says the synod, as the rod of Moses could not have become a serpent without transubstantiation, and as the water was not blood in Egypt, nor wine at the marriage feast of Cana without a change: so in like manner the bread of the Lord's Supper cannot be substantially the body of Jesus Christ, if not changed into his flesh, by losing the form and the substance of bread.'⁴ Let us say

¹ History of the Variations, Book II. No. 32. ² Fol. 49. ³ Inst. B. iv. xvii. No. 30. ⁴ Syn. Czcu. tit. Cœna in Syn. Geneven, part I.

with Bossuet,¹ that good sense dictated this decision. In fact, this bread remaining such, can no more be the body of our Saviour, than the rod, remaining a rod, could be a serpent, or than the water remaining water could be blood in Egypt, and wine at the marriage-feast of Cana.

Moreover, it is worthy of remark, that in spite of the bitterness and vehemence of Luther and his followers against transubstantiation, they did not entertain so terrible an idea of it in the beginning. The simplicity of the words, which has always induced them to preserve the dogma of the real presence, for a long time kept them in the belief of the change of substance.

Luther commenced by teaching it most positively in the following terms:² 'Every action of Christ is an instruction for us, as he himself has told us: I have given you an example that as I have done, so you do also. Do this in commemoration of me, said he. What is the meaning of do this? Is it not what I have just been doing, with you? But what does he do? he takes bread and by this word, *this is my body*, he changes it into his body, and gives it to his disciples to eat.' But soon after Luther changes his own doctrine, and proposes another quite different, still however leaving his followers to adopt which of the two they pleased.

'I permit, says he, that each one may hold which opinion he pleases..... Let each one know that he is free, without endangering his salvation, to embrace which of the two he pleases.'³ He had so little aversion to the Catholic belief upon this change of the substance, that he himself declares that his only reason for rejecting it was because he was so much pressed to receive it.⁴

¹ Hist. de. Variations, liv. II. No. 33. ² 'Omnem Christi actionem, nostram esse instructionem, ut ipsemet dixit Exemplum dedi vobis ut, quemadmodum ego feci vobis ita et vos faciatis. Hoc facite, inquit, in mei memoriam. Quod est, hoc facite? nonne hoc quod ego modo facio vobiscum? Quid autem facit? panem accipit, et verbo quo dicit, hoc est corpus meum, *mutat in corpus suum*, et dat manducandum discipulis.' Vol. II. p. 253, edit. Wittemberg. 1562.

³ *Capt de. ba. t. II.* edit. lat. set. fol. 277. ⁴ We may suppose, without fear of calumny, that his subsequent obstinacy in rejecting the change of the substance, was nearly connected with his design of injuring the Pope and the Church, since he acknowledges that this motive had cause him to wish that it were in his

He was even content that it should be inserted and clearly drawn out by Melancthon first in the confession of Augsburgh, and then in the apology.¹

Here is a literal translation of the 10th article of the Confession, such as it was presented to the Diet. ‘Concerning the Lord’s supper, we teach that the true body and blood of Jesus Christ are truly present under the *species* of bread and wine: that they are distributed and received: for this reason we condemn the opposite doctrine.’²

A year after this authentic confession had been presented at Augsburgh, Melancthon found himself obliged to write a defence of it, which was equally approved and signed by all the Lutheran states.³ In it he still more clearly establishes the change-of the substance, in these words; ‘We find that not only the Roman Church maintains the corporal presence of Jesus Christ, but that the Greek Church also maintains it at the present day, and has maintained it in ancient times. This we may discover from their cannon of the mass, in which the Priest publicly prays that the bread may be changed and may become the body of Jesus Christ. And Vulgarius, an esteemed author, clearly says that the bread is not a figure only, but that it is changed into flesh.’ These two passages extracted from two acts solemnly approved of by all the party, evidently shew that the Lutherans, commenced by admit-

power to get rid of the real presence: we know also of a similar avowal of his on communion under both kinds: ‘If a council were to ordain or permit both kinds, to spite the council we would receive but one, or neither one nor the other. Tom. III. Jen. germ. 274.

¹ ‘And that I may not be taxed with ingratitude to the lessons of my master Henry, I change my sentiments: I *transubstantiate* my opinion, and I say: I formerly declared that it mattered little that the people entertained such sentiments on transubstantiation: now that I have seen such splendid and excellent reasons from the champion of the sacraments, it is no longer so. I pronounce him to be impious and a blasphemer whosoever admits a change in the bread; and him Catholic and pious, whosoever says with Paul: The bread that we break is the body of Jesus Christ. Anathema to him that shall say otherwise or who shall attempt to change an iota, a syllable.’* ² *Confess. Augus.*, 1530. ³ *Apol. Conf. Aug. Aut.* 4, de sac. in Explicat. 10 art.

* Luther against Henry King of England. om. II. edit. de Witt. an. 1546. p. 367.

ting transubstantiation in expressions, and even by going so far as to condemn the contrary doctrine. We know that Melancton was then seeking to draw the principles of reform near to those of the Church, and to present to the deist as much conformity as possible between the two. Perhaps people may now feel disposed to call in question the authenticity of these two passages: I grant that the first was notably altered, ten years after the first edition of the Confession of faith, and that the second has been totally retrenched in later editions of the Apology. It will therefore be necessary to say a few words by way of establishing the authenticity of them both.

1. Count de Kollonitch bishop of Winstadt, reprinted three German copies of the Confession of Augsburgh, taken from the imperial library at Vienna. These three copies, although printed at different times, and differing in many parts, are word for word the same upon the 10th article, of which I have given the literal translation.¹

2. The conformity of this compilation with the passage in the defence renders its authenticity more probable, if it be true that the passage of the defence is itself authentic: and we shall see lower down that the Lutherans grant it to be so.

3. It is certain from Sleiden² and Melancton, as well as from Chytrœus³ and Celestine⁴ in their histories of the confession of Augsburgh, that the Catholics made no objection to the 10th article, in their refutation of the confession, produced by order of Charles V. Now it is not less certain that they would have opposed it, if instead of the articles mentioned above, most conformable to our dogma, they had discovered the one so contradictory, that was afterwards substituted in these words, 'That in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Jesus Christ are given to us *with* the bread and wine.'

¹ I read this fact in the controversial letters containing the motives that determined his highness Prince Frederic, count palatine, duke of Bavaria, to become a Catholic, by Father Francis Seerdorf, who asserts that he wrote with the three copies before him.—Manheim, 1749, vol. ii. p. 100. ² Sleid. *Confess.* ad art. 10. ³ Chytrœus, *Hist. Conf. Aug.* ⁴ Cel. *His. Conf. aug.*, t. iii.

4. Hospinian, a celebrated minister, maintains that this confession must be the original, because it is the one found in the edition of 1530, published at Wittemberg, the cradle of Lutheranism, and the usual abode of Luther and Melancton. He says that the article was afterwards changed on account of its favoring transubstantiation too much, by specifying that the body and blood are received, not with the substance; but under the species of the bread and wine. Schlussenburg, a Lutheran writer¹ makes no difficulty of accusing Melancton himself of having changed his 10th article of the confession, from the leaning he afterwards discovered towards the opinion of the reformed.

As for the passage from the Apology, it was so intimately connected with that of the confession, that it could no longer subsist after the essential alteration which the other had undergone. Consequently they got a new edition of the Apology to be published by the same printer,² and instead of taking the pains to change the article, they suppressed it entirely. The discovery of this fraud produced many complaints, to which it was coldly replied that the article was not worth preserving. Heshusius disapproved of conduct so dishonest, and declared that he would have preferred to have had the error publicly confuted, rather than have given occasion to most unfavorable impressions, by suppressing it with secrecy and fraud.³

Grotius, who so well understood the spirit of Protestantism, expresses himself as follows: 'It is incontestable that according to the Fathers, and a great number of Protestants, with the signs is presented to us the thing itself (in the Eucharist), but in a manner imperceptible to our senses. Thus taught Bucer and others.....To speak my sentiments on the subject, I think that all our great disputants understand perfectly well what the ancient Church teaches, and what the Greek and Latin Churches still teach: but they pretend to know nothing of it, that they may have subject for declamation before those who are led more by the senses of the body than by those of the mind.'⁴

¹ Lib. ii. *Theol. Calv.* art.-10. ² Valent. Eritræus in tab. *august. confess.*

³ In *commentariolo de præes. Christi in cana.* ⁴ *Votum pro pace.* p. 51.

Molanus, the learned Abbe of Lokkum, in the project for the reunion of the Catholics and Protestants of the confession of Augsburg, speaks in the manner following: ‘Drejerus, Professor at Koningsberg, admits here, in a certain sense, a substantial change. I would not vouch for this doctrine; but I should think that I said nothing contrary to the analogy of faith, by supposing that by the words of institution, there is produced in the Lord’s Supper, or in the consecration a certain mysterious change, in which is verified, in an indiscoverable manner, this proposition, so common in the Fathers, *the bread is the body of Jesus Christ*. The Catholics must then be entreated without entering upon the question of the manner in which the change of the bread and wine in the Eucharist is effected, to be satisfied with saying with us and assuredly they would be satisfied with it that this manner is incomprehensible and inexplicable: and yet such, as that by a secret and admirable change of the bread it becomes the body of Jesus Christ: and we must also entreat the Protestants, to whom that might appear a novelty, to make no scruple in saying, *after the example of the first reformers*, that the bread is the body of Jesus Christ, and the wine his blood, because these propositions were formerly so universal that scarcely can an ancient writer be found who has not made use of them.’¹

The same pious and learned Abbe expresses himself elsewhere in these terms: ‘I say that the body of Jesus Christ is precisely and substantially the same upon the altar, as in heaven and upon the cross, but that it is there in a different manner. It was on the cross in a natural and bloody manner; it is in heaven in a visible and glorious manner; whereas on the altar it is in an invisible, unbloody and accessible manner: but it is always the same body. I acknowledge therefore with the Fathers of the eastern and western Churches, the real change operated in the Eucharist, expressed by the words transmutation, transelementation, transubstantiation; which signifies that after the words of our Saviour have been pronounced, there is found truly on the

¹ *Œuvres posthumes de Bossuet*, tom. i. p. 95, Edit. in 4. Amsterdam, 1763.

altar, by virtue of the union with the sensible species, what was not there before. I mean the person of Jesus Christ.¹

Such is the explanation given by a profound theologian attached to the confession of Augsburg, who had no intention of giving offence on the subject of the Eucharist. He thought, and with great reason, according to what we have brought forward, that the change of the substance accorded with the ancient principles of Lutheranism laid down at the diet in the solemn confession of its belief. Would to God that those who at the present day belong to the same communion would regulate their sentiments according to the same principles with the learned and virtuous Molanus! We might then entertain greater hopes of the union so much to be desired by the upright and well disposed of both parties.

In addition to these favorable sentiments of the Lutherans and Calvinists, we have some testimonies of your own countrymen in our favor. Bishop Forbes acknowledges the possibility of transubstantiation in the following terms; 'There is too much temerity and danger in the assertion of many protestants who refuse to God the power of transubstantiating bread into the body of Christ. Every one allows, it is true, that what implies contradiction cannot be done. But as no individual person knows with certainty the essence of each thing, and in consequence what does or does not imply contradiction, it is an evident temerity for any one whomsoever to place bounds to the power of God. I approve of the opinion of the theologians of Wittemberg, who are not afraid to avow that God has power to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.'

Thorndike allows of the change, and tells us in plain terms that 'the elements are really changed from ordinary bread and wine, into the body of Jesus Christ, mysteriously present, as in a sacrament: and this by virtue of the consecration, and in no wise by the faith of the receiver.'²

¹ The result of a conference touching the Eucharist agitated between some religious and M. Molanus, abbe of Lokkum. I regret that I cannot cite the whole of it at length. Let me recommend you to read the whole of it, in this same volume of Bossuet. ² *Epi.* lib 3, c. V.

Bishop Montague declares¹ that the change is produced by the consecration of the elements. In support of this assertion, he cites passages from St. Cyril of Jerusalem, from the liturgy of St. Basil, from St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose: he translates the expressions employed by these Fathers, by the words *transmutation* and *transelementation*. Still after having confessed the change produced by the consecration, after asserting that it was recognised by the primitive Church, he changes sides and concludes by declaring against transubstantiation.²

Samuel Parker, bishop of Oxford, defends and proves it, as follows; 'In the first place then it is evident to all men, that are but ordinarily conversant in ecclesiastical learning, that the ancient Fathers, from age to age asserted the *real* and *substantial* presence in very high and expressive terms. The Greeks stiled it, METABOLE, METARRHIUTHISIS, METASKEUASMOS, METAPOIESIS, METASTOICHEIOSIS. And the Latins agreeable with the Greeks, *Conversion, Transmutation, Transformation, Transfiguration, Transelementation*, and at length *Transubstantiation*: By all which they expressed nothing more nor less than 'the *real* and *substantial* Presence in the Eucharist.'³ The Bishop of Oxford was well aware that transubstantiation not only supposes the real presence but is actually the foundation of it, since, by virtue of the words, the substance of the body of Jesus Christ could not

¹ *Appeal*, ch. xxxi.

² From all appearance he would have returned to it. This learned man thought almost in every thing with the Catholic Church, to which, it is said, he would have united himself, if his death which happened in 1641, had not prevented him from executing this resolution. Four years later, the same cause unfortunately upset the same project of a character still more celebrated for his learning and genius. Grotius, on quitting Paris, confided to his learned and worthy friend M. Bignon, that on his return from Sweden, where he was going to settle his affairs, he would give himself exclusively up to the affair of his salvation, and would unite himself to the Catholic Church. He was returning and had already reached Rostock, when he was seized with a sickness which deprived him of life, the Church of a valuable conquest, and the world of a memorable example. The fact is positively asserted by M. Arnauld, who had it from M. Bignon himself. We know that Father Petau upon hearing of his death, celebrated mass for the repose of his soul.

³ Bishop Parker's reasons for abrogating the Test. page 13, Oct. 30. an. 1678. printed an. 1688, London.

be found in the Eucharist, unless it had taken the place of the substance of the bread. 'Thus far proceeded the Old Church of England, which as it was banished, so it was restored with the crown. But by reason of the interval of twenty years between the rebellion and restitution there arose a new generation of divines that *knew not Joseph*.¹ In short, If they own a *real Presence*, we see from the premises how little the controversie is between that and *Transubstantiation*, as it is truly and ingeniously understood by *all the reformed Churches*. If they do not, they disown the doctrine both of the Church of *England*, and the Church *Catholic*, and then if they own only a *figurative Presence* (and it is plain they own *no other*) they stand condemned of Heresie by almost all the Churches in the Christian world: and if this be the thing pretended to be set up (as it certainly is by the authors and contrivers of it) by renouncing *Transubstantiation*, then the result and bottom of the law is under this pretence to bring a new *Heresie by law* into the Church of England.'²

You see, Sir, that if the doctrine of the real presence has found in your country a great number of defenders, that of transubstantiation has also had its distinguished advocates. You have seen them among the Lutherans, who in general are now become its declared enemies: moreover, (what indeed you yourself must be convinced of) even at the present day, the persons most attached to the confession of Augsburgh and to their first reformers may still, without injury to their principles, enter completely into the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist, after the example of the pious and learned Hanoverian, the Abbe of Lokkum. You have heard the Lutherans prove with us to the Calvinists that it was impossible to admit the figurative sense, and not hold to the literal sense: and the Calvinists joining us afterwards, in proving like us to the Lutherans that the literal sense ought no less necessarily to conduct them to the change of the substance. Thus you have seen them alternately ranged under the Catholic standard, victoriously attacking one another with the arms they

¹ Page 62. ² Pages 65, 66.

borrowed from us, and the Church triumphing in turns from the blows and the defeats they mutually inflicted upon each other.

I will here spare you the detail of the grammatical cavils invented by the Calvinists to authorize the figurative sense against the change of substance. I know what bickering they have borrowed from the rules of grammar, which have been as incorrectly forged as applied by them to each of the words, *this is my body*. I know also that they are not worth the trouble of being refuted, after having been so completely refuted by M. Nicole, with that depth, correctness and clearness which distinguish that great controvertist¹ They easily vanish when brought in contact with the examples, of which the Holy Scripture furnishes us the idea and the subject. Could not Moses have said: *This rod is a serpent, this water is blood?* Could not Jesus Christ, at the marriage feast at Cana, have equally said: *This water is wine?* and when raising to life Lazarus or the only son of the widow of Naim, *this dead person is living?* Would not all these propositions have been true to the letter in spite of the pretended rules of grammar? and would the reformed ever succeed in demonstrating to us their incorrectness, by saying that if it is a rod, it is not really a serpent? if it is water, it is not really blood or wine? if they are dead they are not in reality living? Why persist obstinately in not seeing, and not acknowledging that in the mouth of God, or by his order these propositions operate what they declare? The Almighty commands, and nature instantly obeys. Jesus Christ commands, and the grave gives back its prey, and death releases its victim. He speaks, and the water has changed its substance into that of wine, and the bread its substance into that of his body.²

¹ See *Defense de la perpetuite de la Foi*, tom. I.

² Who can speak in this manner, except him who holds all things in his hand? who can make himself be believed except him to whom doing and saying is the same thing? My soul, stop here without idle discussion! believe as simply, as firmly as thy Saviour hath spoken, and with as much submission as he shewed authority and power. He desires in faith the same simplicity as he put into his words. *This is my body*; therefore it is his body. *This is my blood*; it is therefore his blood. In the ancient manner of communicating, the Priest said: *the*

But if instead of the bread which we perceive, it is the substance of the body that we must believe, our senses will have deceived us, you will say, and their testimony, on which reposes the certainty of the facts in the Gospel, will then be shaken. No, Sir, our senses do not deceive us here, for they do not pronounce sentence, they simply report; and their report is true in the Eucharist. They tell us that they there find the taste, the color, the appearance of bread, all which is there in effect. It is the mind which, from the report of the senses, judges and pronounces: at the sight of the species it would naturally and with reason conclude, that the substance of bread is also there, if on this particular occasion, it had not been admonished to check its natural propensity and to reform its judgment. After the instructions of Jesus Christ, the apostles must have judged, and all of us after them, not from what they saw, but from what they had heard. This is the exception, it is the only one. Except in this instance, and whenever there is no reason from distance or malady for mistrusting our senses, we ought confidently to rely upon them, remembering that our Saviour has himself appealed to them in testimony of his resurrection: See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see: for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see me to have."

It is high time to bring this long discussion to a conclusion. In concluding it, I entreat the adversaries of the real presence and of the change of the substance, candidly and conscientiously to say, whether it be the text of scripture that induces them to deny either of these dogmas; whether, on the contrary, putting aside every other consideration, the text does not of itself naturally conduct them to it: whether they do not stand in need of exertion or violence to turn it from the proper to the figurative sense: whether they have not, with a view to sanction their supposed metaphor, been obliged to bring all the Bible into requisition, for the purpose of extracting a few examples, which, after all, do not agree with the case in question, and can neither *body of Jesus Christ*, and the faithful answered *amen*, it is so. All was done, all was said, all was explained in three words, I am silent, I believe, I adore, all is done, all is said.' Bossuet, *medit. sur l'Evang.*, journ. 22. ¹ Luke xxiv. 39.

warrant them to take the figurative sense nor save them from the natural energy of the words. They must allow, I am intimately persuaded, they must acknowledge that their repugnance to receive the text in its simplicity proceeds solely from the philosophical consequences it brings after it, which frighten reason: a body existing in many places at the same time! the body which suffered, which is, in heaven, educed to so small a space in the Eucharist! bread and wine, according to all appearance, and no such thing in reality! who can persuade himself of this? who can believe it? This is the ground of their infidelity, this is the scandal that determines them against each of these mysteries; it is better they think, to resist the Scriptures, better to turn aside the sense of the words of Jesus Christ, than to admit the sense, which they present with all its consequences.

For my part, to act with the candor and good faith I wish to see in them, I frankly admit these consequences. I allow that they are impenetrable, and not less alarming to human comprehension: they are so, it is true. But is it less true that Jesus Christ promised that he would give us his flesh to eat, the same flesh that he would deliver for the life of the world, and that this flesh would be meat indeed? Is it less true that in executing his promise, and presenting the object he held in his hand, he said: *Take, eat, this is my body?* Is it less true that he had the power to operate what he asserted, and much beyond what we can understand? Is it less true that he could not wish to mislead us by fallacious expressions, being essentially truth itself; that with a word he could have made us understand the figure, if he had not wished us to understand the reality; that his goodness and his justice obliged him to do it, since he knew the disputes, the animosities, and the horrible schism, which the cause of this reality would one day occasion in the Church? Is it less true that it is much more sure and reasonable to mistrust ourselves than him; to believe in simplicity what he has said to us in so simple a manner, than to heap up difficulties for which, after all, we are no ways responsible? Is it not wiser to turn away our eyes from them and to fix them upon him who has spoken? We

are guilty if we do not hear and believe him, but we cannot be guilty if we do not understand the whole extent of his discourse; for he is as infinite in his intelligence as we are circumscribed in ours.¹ He has made known to us his intention and his will by all, that language possesses the most simple, most consistent, and intelligible, so that we cannot be mistaken as to the natural and proper sense which the words present; all the parts agree together, it is within the reach of all men to judge of them. What is not within their reach, and what never can be so here below, is the following up of the consequences that result from it, explaining the manner in which this reality of the presence is effected, and comprehending by what invisible cause and secret this change of substance is operated. But where has it been learned that we have a right to reject what is easily conceived, because in its train follow obscurities which we cannot penetrate? Wherefore do we obstinately resist what surpasses our comprehension, and close our eyes to what strikes us? Why do we wish to give an account to ourselves of that which we know to be impenetrable to our ideas? Let us not foolishly seek to overleap the boundaries by which we are circumscribed. Let us hold fast to our Saviour: let us rest firmly on his word; and be assured that the appearances of contradiction and impossibilities which confound us now that we see through the veil and the cloud, will vanish from our eyes, the instant we shall contemplate the objects by the light of celestial splendor. Let us wait: we shall, each of us, soon be there: the longest life is very short.

¹ They must leave off all their quibbling and disputing, and take whatever they find plainly revealed in the Gospel; remembering, that though infinite wisdom and goodness can never possibly oblige them to believe any thing that is really absurd and contradictory, or do any thing which is unreasonable; yet they may be obliged to believe and practise many things, which unconquered prejudice may tell them are absurd and unreasonable, and which they may think to be so, by using themselves to judge of the ways of God too much by human rules and measures.' Humphrey Ditton, *Disourse on the Resurrection*. Part I. sect. 4. p. 15. second edit. London: 1714.

LETTER VIII.

Examination of tradition upon the Eucharist.

I HAVE engaged myself, Sir, to justify the decrees of the Church upon the Eucharist, to shew you their conformity with the doctrine revealed by Jesus Christ and transmitted to us in the two-fold deposit of the scriptures and tradition. The first of these you have just been examining, and in it you must have discovered the principal dogmas, which the Church obliges us to believe. The second is now about to be laid open before your eyes, and in it you will see these same dogmas taught at all times, and indubitably deriving their origin from the preaching of the apostles. It is an immense field to pass over; but be not alarmed; the ages, with which above all it will be our business to become well acquainted, are the most ancient. We will confine ourselves to the six first: and by proceeding methodically, we shall avoid the confusion into which we should otherwise be thrown by the quantity of monuments, facts, and passages, which will successively present themselves to us. We will begin by arranging them into two classes, into general and particular proofs. The former will bring us acquainted with the belief of all the Churches of the world at once; the latter will shew us the testimonies separately given by particular teachers in its favor.

First general proof drawn from the discipline of secrecy.

Every person who will pay any attention to the history of the first ages of the Church will be struck with a point of discipline which I propose here to investigate with you, and which regards the inviolable secrecy observed by all the faithful on the sacraments, and especially on that of the altar. Jesus Christ gave it as a precept to his disciples, when he commanded them under figurative expressions, not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor to cast pearls before swine.¹ When he instituted his august

¹ Matth. vii.

sacrament, he would have none but his apostles for witnesses: and we see that after his example the apostles never celebrated but in secrecy. The scripture positively remarks that they met daily in the temple, and there prolonged their prayers, but that they entered into the interior of some private house to participate of the body of the Lord;¹ for this undoubtedly is the signification of the *breaking of bread*, in the style of the new testament: the first enigmatical expression upon the Eucharist that we meet with in antiquity; an expression moreover, which, while it was well comprehended by the Christians, could not be understood by the unbelievers. I know that St. Paul has spoken more openly and I have myself quoted his words: but he was writing to the Corinthians: his letter was addressed and entrusted to the discretion of the clergy of this Church, who read only to the faithful those passages, which were forbidden to those who were not of the number of the faithful. We must say as much for the passage in which St. Ignatius speaks with more clearness of the Eucharist in his epistle to the inhabitants of Smyrna.

In ancient times the sacraments were designated under the general name of *mysterics*, which signifies things hidden. They were administered in private assemblies, after sending out all those who were not initiated. Until the time of the celebration it was permitted to the catechumens, the strangers, and even the unbelievers to remain. They assisted at the prayers, and the lessons that were read from the old testament by *lectors*, from the new, by priest or deacons. They could moreover hear the explanation of the scripture, reserved to the bishops, sometimes, but rarely, delegated by them to a priest. In these homelies or public explanations of the scripture, the preacher was exceedingly cautious not to speak of the *mysterics*, or if his subject obliged him to make allusion to them; he did it with extreme reserve, covering the doctrine under enigmatical terms, that it might not be understood by the catechumens or the pagans. 'We do not speak clearly of the mysterics before the catechumens, said St. Cyril of Jerusalem: but we are often constrained

¹ Acts. ii. 42, 46.

to use obscure expressions, in order that, making ourselves well understood by the instructed faithful, those who are not so may not receive injury from it.¹ St. Ambrose says also, 'that if he had spoken of the sacraments, it would have been, not to instruct them in them, but to make a discovery of them by a kind of treachery.'² Nothing is more common in St. Chrysostom than this manner of speaking: 'The initiated alone know it: the mystics are instructed in it. I would wish, says he again, to speak out clearly upon baptism; but I dare not on account of those who are not initiated. These persons make the explications of these things more difficult to us, by obliging us either to speak obscurely or to discover hidden things: and notwithstanding, I will explain myself as far as I possibly can, in covert and veiled terms.'³ In the other Fathers, particularly in St. Augustine, we frequently find concealments, phrases and sentences broken off and purposely obscured, on the subject of the Eucharist.

You see clearly, Sir, that this reserve never leaving them when they spoke in public, did not forsake them when they took the pen and composed works to confound heretics, pagans and Jews. If they had divulged the secret in their writings, it would have been as ridiculous as useless to be so scrupulously careful and skilfully discreet in treating the subject in their sermons. St. Cyril of Alexandria satisfies himself with answering to the objections of Julian the Apostate against Baptism, 'that these mysteries are so profound, and so lofty, that they cannot be comprehended but by those who have faith: that therefore for fear that by discovering the mysteries to the uninitiated, he should offend Jesus Christ, who forbids holy things to be given to dogs, and pearls to be cast before swine, he will not undertake to treat of the more profound parts of them.'⁴ And after having touched somewhat upon it, he adds that he would say much more about it, were he not afraid of being understood by the uninitiated, because, says he, people generally ridicule what they do not understand, and ignorant persons, not even being aware of the

¹ Catech. vi. ² *Book on the mysteries, for the newly initiated*, ch. 1, No. 1.

³ Hom. xl, on the 1st Ep. to the Corinthians. ⁴ *Contra Julianum*, lib. vii.

weakness of their minds, contemn what they ought most to admire.' Remark the reserve they imposed upon themselves in the works destined for the public. It is here expressly mentioned, as well as in other fathers: and we have always a right to suppose it, even when it is not announced in express terms. This habit of precaution and silence, so general in the primitive Church, continued up to the commencement of the fifth century, when we see that Innocent I, replying even to a bishop who had consulted him, dares not open himself in writing upon the mysterious part of the Eucharist. As for the rest, says he, which it is not permitted me to write, we shall be able to speak of that by word of mouth, when you shall be here.¹ Hear now in what manner the Abbé Fleury draws out in few words this discipline of secrecy with his usual accuracy and precision. 'It was customary to keep the sacraments concealed, not only from the unbelievers, but also from the catechumens: and they not only did not celebrate them in their presence, but they dared not even relate to them what passed in them, nor speak even of the nature of the sacrament. They wrote still less about them; and if, in a public discourse, or in a writing which might fall in prophane hands, they were obliged to speak of the Eucharist or of some other mystery, they did it in obscure and enigmatical terms.'

But how then, you will ask me, did the faithful come to the knowledge of them? and what were the occasions on which the bishops openly explained to them the doctrine of the mysteries? When the catechumens had been sufficiently proved and appeared worthy to receive baptism, the favor of which they persevered in soliciting, for it was only conferred upon those who asked for it, they were collected together at the baptismal font, on the eve of Easter or Pentecost, solemn and splendid nights, generally set apart for the regeneration of adults. It was here, before their immersion in the sacred water, that the bishop explained to them openly and fully the necessity and the effects of the first of the sacraments. On coming out of the baptismal waters, they were conducted, clothed in a white robe, to the assembled faithful,

¹ Ad Decentium Eugubinum episcopum.

whose number they were from henceforth to augment : the bishop then ascending the pulpit, and drawing away the veil which till then had concealed the mysteries from them, brought them to light before the neophytes ; and the instructions upon the institution, upon the nature and effects of the Eucharist, upon the sentiments of lively faith, of piety and love which the participation of these august mysteries required of them, were continued every day of the first week. Such was the general practice of the Churches up to the fifth age, as many monuments of those primitive times testify and suppose.

However true, and conformable this historical account may be with all that we know of antiquity, it has nevertheless been contradicted by Protestants, particularly by Calvinistic teachers. This I must not conceal from you. They have pretended, and you will soon be struck with astonishment at it, that this discipline of secrecy and reserve upon the mysteries, far from coming down from the apostles, was unknown to the three first ages, and only dates its origin from the fourth. These gentlemen have found it suitable and convenient enough to suppose, that the pagans of the three first ages were perfectly acquainted with the doctrine of the Church on the Eucharist, in order to display with greater plausibility a pretended unanswerable objection against the Catholic dogma. But what they have invented against the truth has never been able and never will be able to stand examination. The principle they here suppose is evidently contrary to facts and even to good sense. In effect, how could these gentlemen, with their well known sagacity and talents, imagine, and how can they have the hardihood to attempt to persuade others, that what was generally known during the three first ages, ceased all at once to be known in the fourth ? that all the bishops and all the members of every Christian society should then have formed the project, and have been able to accomplish it, to remove away in a day from every thing that was not Christian, the belief of the Eucharist, which the day before was unknown to no one ? Did ever any one think of attempting to conceal from the world what for centuries had been known over all the earth ? If it be a folly

to attempt it, it is a less supportable folly to suppose that such a thing was ever undertaken, and above all, undertaken with success? The secrecy so religiously observed in the fourth age, demonstrates therefore from this single fact, that it must have been equally observed in anterior times, and up to the days of the apostles. It is very true that the fourth age, abounding more in monuments of every kind, furnishes us with many more proofs of the discipline of secrecy, than the three first, which were unceasingly agitated by persecutions. Prayer, and good works were then the great occupation, and they had less leisure for writing, when every moment they were expecting to be called forth to answer for their faith, and seal it with their blood.

But, Sir, if the three first ages offer us fewer direct proofs than the succeeding one, they present indirect proofs, which perhaps have still more weight, and which, I doubt not, will excite in you still more interest and admiration for those heroic periods of Christianity. In fact, tell me, I pray, if the apostles and their disciples had made no mystery of the Eucharist, if in the three first ages, jews and pagans, unbelievers and catechumens, had known the doctrine and practice of it, would people have ever dreamed of forging, with regard to the celebration of this sacrament, the atrocious calumnies, of which undoubtedly you have heard? Would they have succeeded in gaining credit for them in the world? in raising up all nations against the Christian name? in making these nations demand the punishment and death of the Christians, whom they abhorred on account of the erroneous notions they had formed of them, as abominable monsters, unworthy to see the day? Ferocious men had invented these horrors: men probably deceived had circulated them. They ran therefore through the provinces of the empire, every where admonishing the world to guard against a new sect of people, who, under the mask of exterior virtues, gave themselves up, in the secrecy of their mysteries, to the most shameful acts of cruelty and debauchery; who slaughtered, as they confidently asserted, a new born infant, covered with flour, preserved the blood to drink, or to dip their bread therein, roasted their palpi-

tating victim, then divided its limbs among them for a repast, and terminated this horrid feast by casting a bit before a dog, which being tied to the lamps, overturned and extinguished them by leaping upon its booty; that then men, women, fathers and daughters, mothers and sons were all confusedly and indiscriminately jumbled together in the dark. Do not these imputations framed and accredited upon uncertain and confused notions of the body and blood, of which they had heard that the Christians participated, do they not, I say, shew, on the one hand the ignorance universally existing among the people, and on the other the impenetrable secrecy observed by the Christians on what was believed and practised among them? And now, Sir, how far back do you think these calumnies, and their bloody consequences may be traced? As far as the very time of the apostles. We learn from Origen,¹ that from the birth of Christianity, the Jews had spread a report through the world that the Christians fed upon the limbs of an immolated babe; from Tertullian,² that from the reign of Tiberius, these feasts of Atreus and Thyestes had been again conjured up through hatred and detestation of the Christians; and in fine from Eusebius,³ that Simon and his disciples, Carpocrates, Basilides and Saturninus, were the authors of these atrocities. Simon, having received baptism from Philip the apostle, and participated in the mysteries, had returned to his art-magic and impostures, and by these calumnies, worthy of an apostate, he thought without doubt, that he should either force the Christians to renounce their religious observance of secrecy, or make them sink under the weight of this infamous accusation.

If the apostles and their disciples had made no mystery of the Eucharist: if, in the three first ages, Jews and Pagans, unbelievers and catechumens had known its doctrine and practice, why did the philosophers, who wrote at that time, reproach them with the obscurity in which they kept themselves, and from it pretend to justify the accusations which the voice of the whole world raised against them. In like manner, at the entrance of the third century, Cecilius advanced, without hesitation, 'that

¹ Lib. iv, *contra Celsum*. ² *Apol.*, cap. xvii. ³ *Hist.*, Lib. iv. c. vii.

the obscurity in which this religion was concealed proved the truth of a part of the crimes imputed to it. Why this necessity for hiding themselves and concealing their worship from the public eye, since men fear not to expose to light what is fair and good?' So also at the conclusion of the first age or the commencement of the second, Celsus, the philosopher, frequently referred to the secrecy of the mysteries, and bitterly attacked the affected privacy of Christianity, &c.²

If the apostles and their disciple had made no mystery of the Eucharist, if in the three first ages, Jews and Pagans, unbelievers and catechumens, had been acquainted with its doctrine and practice, what need would there have been to put Christians to the torture, in order to extort from them a confession of the crimes imputed to them? And yet Pliny the younger, governor of Bithynia, in the account he gave to Trajan of the Christians, says, on occasion of the reports which were circulating in the world about them, 'that he had on that account deemed it the more necessary to interrogate on the rack, two women who were said to have ministered in their secret assemblies. But I found nothing, adds he, more than an ill regulated and excessive superstition.'³ Do we not know moreover from a fragment of Irenæus,⁴ that in the persecution at Lyons, the Roman magistrates upon the irregular deposition of some slaves, persuaded themselves that the Christians actually practised what was laid to their charge, and endeavored by torments to get an acknowledgment to that effect from Blandina? But this Christian slave replied with a freedom full of wisdom; 'How should those, who through piety abstain from meats otherwise lawful to eat, be capable of doing the things you impute to us?' Be pleased to observe this last instance of concealment in the heroic Blandina: we shall soon have occasion to refer to it again. Do we not know also from Eusebius, to whom we are indebted for the admirable letter of the Christians of Lyons to those of Asia, that Biblis, one of those who had been weak enough to deny their faith, 'was put

¹ In Minutius Felix. ² In Origen. ³ Pliny's letter to Trajan, in. 105. ⁴ In Eusebius, year 177.

to the torture that she might be forced to confess the impieties imputed to the Christians? The torments roused her from a profound sleep: these transitory pangs made her reflect upon the eternal pains of hell: and how said she, should we eat the flesh of children, we who are not even allowed to eat the blood of beasts? She then confessed herself a Christian, and was ranked among the martyrs.¹ Thus the demonstrated ignorance of the Pagans upon the Eucharist restores to the Church a soul, whose overthrow it had for a moment bewailed, and replaces *Biblis* with honor at the side of the invincible *Blandina*.

But if our adversaries, after so many convincing proofs, still require some that are direct, with regard to the three first centuries, *Tertullian* and *Origen* shall now supply them with proofs most positive. The former, repelling the charges of infanticide and impurities, exclaims; 'Who are they who have told the world these pretended crimes? Would it be those who are accused of them? But how could that be, since it is the common law of all the mysteries to keep them secret? If they themselves did not make the discovery, it must have been strangers that did it. But how could strangers have any knowledge of them, since strangers are kept far away from the sight of the most holy mysteries, and a selection is made of those who are permitted to remain as spectators.'² If the Christians made no difficulty about speaking of the Eucharist, how could *Tertullian* say, that 'the common law of the mysteries was to keep them secret.' If the Pagans were instructed in them, what right had he to ask, 'How could strangers become acquainted with these things?' In the work he addresses to his wife, he supposes as a fact, that the Christians believed themselves bound to secrecy, because he employs it as an argument for deterring her from taking an unbeliever to her second husband. 'For by this means, says he, people fall into the crime of letting the Pagans come to the knowledge of our mysteries..... Might not your husband learn,

¹ The Christians at that time and long afterwards, observed the prohibition of eating blood, issued in the old law, and confirmed by the council of the apostles.

² *Apol. cap. vii. second century.*

said he, what it is you taste in secret before all nourishment? and if he perceives that it is bread, will he not imagine it to be that which is so much spoken of?¹

Origen in his noble refutation of the work of Celsus after saying in answer to his reiterated reproaches of secrecy, that in general the doctrine of the Christians was better known than that of the philosophers; 'It is nevertheless true, he adds, that there are certain points among us, that are not communicated to every one, but this is so far from being peculiar to the Christians that it was observed among the philosophers as well as among us. . . . In vain then does Celsus undertake to render odious the secrecy observed by the Christians, since he does not even know in what it consists.'² This passage proves at once that the secret was observed both in the time of Origen and in that of Celsus, who knew not in what it consisted, that is, at the commencement of the third century and at the end of the first. Thus all kinds of proofs conspire to shew the discipline of the secrecy relative to the Eucharist during the four first ages. The fact is acknowledged by all for the fourth: and good sense demonstrates that it could not then have been established, if it had not existed from the very time of the apostles. The calumnies of unbelievers, the attacks of the philosophers, the tortures employed by governors to extort a confession of the pretended crimes, are indirect, but convincing proofs of secrecy, and in addition to this, we have positive testimonies for the first, second and third centuries.³

I have been anxious to set this historical fact beyond dispute, and invest it with all the certainty you can desire, because the general discipline of secrecy necessarily supposes the universal belief of the five first ages upon the Eucharist, to be such as the Catholic Church has always taught: in fact, if, on the one hand, this discipline agrees exactly with our belief respecting the Eucharist, and if, on the other, it should be found irreconcilable with the opinion which the Calvinists have formed of it, it must

¹ *To his wife*, B. ii. v. ² *Orig. con'ra Celsum*, Lib. I.

See in the *Appendix* many authorities which establish the discipline of secrecy from the apostles to the commencement of the fifth century.

of strict necessity be concluded that what was concealed in the primitive Church is not what the reformed believe, but what we believe. In those times the concealment was made either of the doctrine of the figurative sense, or of that of the reality; there is no medium, and if secrecy excludes the first, it necessarily admits of the second. All that remains therefore is to establish the truth of these two propositions; first that the discipline of secrecy exactly tallies with the Catholic sense of the reality; in the second place that it cannot be reconciled with the calvinistic sense of the figure. I am persuaded that of yourself you will catch the argument before I explain it, so striking does it appear to me.

1. I maintain that the ancient discipline of secrecy exactly chimes in with our belief upon the Eucharist. It would be superfluous to enter into a long dissertation to shew the incapability of reason to attain to the inaccessible sublimities which are found in the dogma, such as the Church proposes to us and as we believe it. The reformed confess this, since they have made it the cause of their rejecting and attacking it. But in the supposition that the primitive Church believed as we do, what was it to do? and how must it manage with regard to the unbelievers? It must before all things, prove to them the certainty of the revelation, convince them, by the miracles of Jesus Christ and by the sublimity of his morality, of the divinity of his mission, and never attempt to confide to them respecting the Eucharist, dogmas so elevated, so alarming to human comprehension, until it had sufficiently prepared their minds and hearts for them: it must have done precisely what it did. If the Christians had begun by bringing forward these mysteries, if they had commenced by speaking openly of the real presence of Jesus Christ upon the altar, and of the miraculous change of the substance which follows from it, they would have shocked the senses and the imagination of men, and have driven those from their religion whom they were desirous of attracting to it. What language, in fact, and what a strange doctrine for the Jews and Pagans! What would not their senses and the pretended wisdom on which

they prided themselves, have suggested against it? Let us judge what would have been said by men who were not Christians, by what we are continually hearing from men, who, unfortunately for them have ceased to be so. It was necessary then for their interest charitably to spare their weakness: it was necessary also for the interest of truth, not to expose it to the railleries of those who were not yet in a state to hear it: and on the supposition that the dogma was then the same as it is for us, it cannot be denied that it was reasonable and even necessary to establish this discipline of secrecy.

And to shew still more evidently the analogy of our actual belief with that of the first ages, I observe, that in supposing an exact parity between them, not only must the greatest secrecy have been then recommended, but it must moreover have been recommended from the two kinds of motives just mentioned, the one relative to the weakness of the persons, or if you please, the ignorance and blindness of the unbelievers, the other, to the dignity and divine institution of the mysteries: in order, that on one side, the unbelievers might not be injured or scandalized, and thus driven away from Christianity; and on the other, that the mysteries might not be exposed to the railleries, sarcasms and objections of carnal minds. Now, in point of fact, (and this must strike you,) the discipline of secrecy turned exactly upon these two kinds of motives. They are each of them distinctly pointed out by the Fathers. 'We make use of obscure expressions before the catechumens, said St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in order that those who are not instructed may not be injured by them.' Now hear the whole synod of Alexandria: 'It is not lawful openly to disclose the mysteries to the uninitiated, lest through ignorance they shou'd ridicule them, and lest the catechumens should happen to be scandalized by an indiscreet curiosity.' Such is the first kind of motives, relative to the state of the unbelievers or catechumens.

You will recollect the reason alleged by St. Cyril of Alexandria for his concealment: He would have been afraid of being understood by the uninitiated, because, said he, people generally ridi-

cule what they do not understand, and ignorant persons, not aware of the weakness of their own minds, despise what they should most of all admire.' An author, anonymous indeed, but of very high antiquity, since we find him translated by Rufinus in the fourth age, proves that it is extremely difficult to preach to a mixed multitude of persons, and often necessary in their presence to shroud the mysteries in ambiguous terms. 'For what is amongst us cannot be told indiscriminately to all persons exactly as it is, on account of those who lend a captious and malignant ear. What then must be done by one who addresses a crowd of persons strange and unknown to him? Shall he conceal the truth? But in that case how is he to instruct those who are deserving of instructions? And yet if he display the naked truth before those to whom salvation is a thing of indifference, he is false to him by whom he is sent, and from whom he has received injunction not to cast the pearls of true doctrine before swine and dogs, who would fly in its face with sophisticated arguments, would cover it with the mud of their carnal conceptions, and by their barking, and their disgusting replies would worry to death the preachers of God.'¹ Here you see a second series of motives relating to the dignity of the mysteries. You will find both of them set forth in many ecclesiastical writers, such as Tertullian, Zeno, bishop of Verona, &c. They are precisely such as they must have been, on the supposition that the real presence or change of substance were then concealed in secrecy. Their fears and anxieties were such as they must certainly have entertained on this hypothesis: their precautions were those that it requires, and they were influenced by all the motives that it commands. The identity of apprehensions, dangers and measures denotes the identity of principles and belief. We have then solid grounds for concluding that it was the real presence together with its change of substance, that all the Churches of the world kept shut up in those times so scrupulously in their bosom. This is disclosed to us by the secrecy itself, as well as by the motives of the secrecy, so exactly do they tally with this

¹ Lib. xxx. recognit.

belief, as you have just seen. I add, for the completion of this moral demonstration, that they tally with this alone; and prove it.

2. In fact, what is there I ask, in the Zuinglian opinion requiring to be made so great a secret to pagans and catechumens? According to it, we become united to our Saviour, but only in spirit and by faith: prayers and homage are addressed to Jesus Christ at the right hand of God, but in no-wise upon the altar, from which he is supposed to be as far removed as earth from heaven: they call to mind his death, but without pretending to renew the oblation made by him upon the cross. For this opinion acknowledges neither sacrifice nor victim: it exposes, it is true, and distributes to its followers the bread and wine, but still remaining in effect as our senses perceive them: according to it, every change of substance is a gross error, and adoration an act of idolatry. These ordinary aliments, bread and wine, have here no other excellency than that of having been chosen by Jesus Christ as figures of his body and blood. What fault could the most obstinate Jew or unbeliever find with this? Is it not a common and received custom to leave some pledge of one's self to our friends on quitting them, that thus we may be brought to their recollection during our absence or after death? and is it not a thing quite indifferent whether this or that object be selected to awaken remembrance, warm the heart, and fulfil between absent friends this ministry of reciprocal tenderness? It is even plain that our Saviour, when dying for mankind, had nothing better to select and leave them as a memorial and pledge, than the common aliment of all mankind. In all this you will discover nothing revolting to the mind, nothing calculated to give a shadow of scandal to men and by consequence nothing that required secrecy.

I know that the ministers¹ have sometimes taken it into their heads to speak of the great wonders of their Eucharist, and of the incomprehensibilities to be found in it, without the real presence or any change of substance. But I also know that they affect his language merely to resemble that of antiquity, and to

¹ Calvin, Aubertin, Claude.

shew that the passages in which the Fathers enlarge upon the difficulty of believing in the mystery, from its opposition to the senses and to human reason, correspond with their doctrine as well as with ours. But in point of fact, Zuinglius and Beza discovered no mystery at all in the Eucharist: they prided themselves upon the discovery of the figurative sense, because it removed at once the difficulties and the scandal, and rendered the belief simple and easy to every understanding. No other than this is the judgment formed of it by the Zuinglians of your country, as I have often had occasion to learn from their conversation and writings. 'In my judgment, said a writer well known amongst you, nothing has occasioned the loss of that due reverence, which is owing to the sacraments, so much, as the making more of them than the scripture has done: and representing them as *mysteries*, when they are plain religious actions. The unintelligible part of a sacrament is what the free-thinkers have chiefly made the object of their ridicule: but had the Eucharist been represented, as I have represented it, it could never have been mentioned by infidels with disrespect, at least it would have given them no occasion of treating it with any.'¹

¹ Bishop Pearce's second letter, written in 1730, to Doctor Waterland's Works. London, 1777, vol. II. p. 452. It may also be found in a note of Dr. Sturges reflections on Popery, p. 100.

To one who has reflected upon the texts of the New Testament, upon the doctrine of the apostolic and primitive ages; to one who is not a stranger to the testimonies of the holy Fathers, some of which I shall continue to produce to the end of this dissertation, I know nothing more unchristian and more revolting than this system of the anglican prelate. It strips the Eucharist of all the wonders which our Lord had thrown round it, and with which his first, and faithful servants have at all times believed it to be invested: and boasts to have by this manœuvre removed from what are called men of strong minds, but who are more appropriately called men of weak minds, every pretext for irreverent declamation. With the admirable principles of these conciliating divines, it only remains for them to draw their pen over all the mysteries of religion, because, in good truth, the proud and of coarse weak wits of the age, employ by preference their sarcasms and abuse against whatever is mysterious in doctrine.

Add this new example to the examples I have already adduced, of the infinite variations and perpetual discord into which the uncontrolled liberty of dogmatizing leads the members of your Church, and even the very inmates of its sanctuary, as you see by these three personages.

Had the primitive Church thought after the fashion of this modern theologian, never would it have had any reason to withhold its altars from the sight of the catechumens and the knowledge of unbelievers. Sheltered from the shafts of ridicule and malice, it might have celebrated its Eucharist with open doors, and have discoursed and written upon it without obscurity or disguise. But how did it act? Precisely contrary, and during full four centuries it rigorously maintained the discipline of secrecy respecting the mysteries, particularly respecting the one of which we speak. Let your Bishop Pearce, and whatever associates he can reckon in the world, acquaint us, if they can, with a plausible reason, for such conduct. There is none: there can be none, according to their ideas of the Eucharist: their opinion and discipline of secrecy cannot go together; they are at eternal variance. All mystery being once removed from the sacrament, the primitive Church had no longer any cause for silence and secrecy.

But what am I saying? She would moreover have been urged by the most pressing motives to make a full explanation of it. Atrocious and abominable actions are publicly laid to her charge, and she does not attempt her justification! though this justification would be easily accomplished, by the simple declaration of her belief and practice. And if a candid explanation of this nature were found to be insufficient for the purpose, why did she not throw open her doors and admit her accusers or their emissaries into her assemblies, and celebrate her religious repast in their presence? Nothing could be more natural than this, on the supposition that she adopted the system of the figurative sense, at which the pagans could take no offence. The declaration published by these witnesses, of what had passed under their own eyes, would immediately have put an end to the calumnies that had gone abroad to the world.

And, observe, it was not the common people alone among whom such ideas were current: they had reached the highest and the most enlightened classes of society. Numbers took up their pen against the Christians, and boasted that they had proved these

crimes, on the grounds of their clandestine assemblies and the secrecy of their doctrine. What reply would the Christian apologists have to make, on the Zuinglian hypothesis? Simply, or nearly this: 'So far are we from perpetrating the crimes which you lay to our charge, that we take, in our sacred repast, nothing more than a little bread and wine in memory of our divine master; the bread, as the figure of the body which he delivered, and the wine, as the figure of his blood which he shed for us. He himself, on the eve of his passion, instituted this holy and moving ceremony, commanding us to do it after his departure, in remembrance of his death, and also as a sign of union between us and him: we merely obey his commands.' But was this satisfactory and natural reply ever given? Attend and see: 'Our accusers, says Justin, themselves commit the crimes of which they accuse us, and they attribute them to their gods. As for us, as we have no share in them, so we trouble not ourselves about them, having God for the witness of our actions and thoughts..... We entreat you that this apology may be rendered public, after you have replied to it as to you may seem fitting, to the end that others, may know what we are, and we may be delivered from the false suspicions, that expose us to punishment. They know not that we condemn the infamies publicly laid to our charge, and that we therefore renounce the gods who committed such enormities, and who require the same from their adorers. If you will grant our request, we shall then lay open our maxims to the world—to convert it, if its conversion is possible.'¹ Observe, he does not say; we will expose our mysteries, we will celebrate before witnesses, we will throw open our doors. This however would have put an end to all calumnies and removed all suspicions. On the Zuinglian hypothesis, it is difficult to imagine what could have prevented Justin from publicly making an offer at once so simple and so natural.² If we always

¹ *Apol. advo. Aurel.* an. 117.

² According to the Zuinglian system, again, how are we to conceive that a young Christian should ever be reduced to have recourse to the following astonishing proposal, in proof of his ignorance. 'Even one of our brethren, at Alexandria, to convince the world, that in our mysteries there are none of the

remain concealed, replied Tertullian, how have they discovered what we do? and by whom has it been discovered? Assuredly, not by the accused, for it is the common law of all mysteries to keep them secret. It must then have been by strangers. But whence could these know it, since the sacred initiations admit no strangers and reject the profane? In vain was their clandestine worship objected to them by the pagans: far from denying or renouncing it, Tertullian takes up its justification, and employs it to demonstrate how futile must be the accusations of those who know nothing of the matter. 'Do you really believe it possible, exclaims Octavius, that the tender little body of an infant should be destined to fall beneath our blows, and that we should shed the blood of a new-born babe, almost before it has received the shape of human being. Let him believe it, whose cruelty could accomplish such a deed as for us, we are not permitted to assist at a homicide, nor even to hear it spoken of: so far, indeed, are we from spilling human blood, that we forbid even the blood of animals at our meals.' The secrecy of the Christians is cruelly misrepresented and aspersed; and yet Octavius does no more than shew that they are incapable of committing the imputed crimes, never discovering what it is that they really do. 'If our accusers be asked,' says Athenagoras, 'whether they have seen what they assert of us, they will not have the impudence to say they have..... How can those be accused of killing and eating men, who, as it is well known, cannot endure to behold even the death of one executed by law? those who have renounced, as we have, the shows of the gladiators and of the beasts, believing that there is but little difference between him who beholds, and him who commits the murder.' You have seen Origen justifying their profound silence respecting the mysteries by the example of the philosophers, of the

infamous practices attributed to us, presented a petition to Felix the governor, for permission to have a surgeon to make a eunuch of him (for it was said that this permission was necessary). Felix gave no reply of this petition and the young man remained unmolested, satisfied with the testimony of his conscience." Justin in his *Apology* addressed to Antoninus, 150 years after the birth of Jesus Christ. ¹In Minutius Felix.

Greeks and barbarians; you have seen him in his turn reproaching Celsus for reprobating the secret kept by the Christians, while he knew not in what that secret consisted. Such were the replies of the apologist: and such also they must have been, to be consistent with our belief. But according to the doctrine of the reformation these replies become inconceivable and absurd. For is it not absurd to establish a secret, and instead of being induced by the most powerful reason to break it, still to continue obstinately to preserve and justify it, even when they knew nothing in it worth concealing?¹

¹ Truth obliges me to say that one of these apologists has not hesitated to remove the veil and lay open the mystery of the altar. Justin has done it in his first apology. We shall endeavor soon to detect his motive for so doing. But as he thought proper to act in this manner, we will ask: what did he discover? what did he make known? This is a curious and important point to ascertain: for most assuredly the doctrine that he discovered was the doctrine of the Church—the precise doctrine so carefully concealed by the other Christians. This disclosure must for ever decide the question between us. Let the Reformation triumph, as is just, if the apologist here declares in formal or equivalent terms, that the bread and wine blessed by the bishop were received by the faithful, merely as signs of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, absent in heaven: that the bread, without undergoing any change, ceased notwithstanding to be regarded as ordinary bread, because it was offered to God as an emblematical figure representing his Son. Will Justin hold such language as this? Let us hear him with attention; these are the words to the point; they are big with interest and importance: ‘This food we call the Eucharist, of which they alone are allowed to partake, who believe the doctrines taught by us, and have been regenerated by water for the remission of sin, and who live as Christ ordained. For we do not take these gifts, as common bread and common drink, but as Jesus Christ, our Saviour, made man by the word of God, took flesh and blood for our Salvation; in like manner we have been taught, that the food which has been blessed by the prayer of the words which he spoke, and by which our flesh and blood, in the change, are nourished, *becomes* the flesh and blood of Jesus incarnate.’ Such is the doctrine which Justin made no difficulty in revealing to the Emperor: you have here the word of God compared to the prayer of Jesus Christ: the same power and efficacy is attributed to each; by the former Jesus became man, by the latter, the bread and wine become his body and blood, and this change is not less real than was that of his incarnation. From this springs the following short and decisive argument. Justin here discovers that, which the Christians were universally concealing in secrecy. Now what he discovers is the Catholic doctrine; therefore the Catholic doctrine had been universally concealed in secrecy among the Christians. Pray, reflect upon this argument; it alone should open your eyes to the system of belief that you are seeking in the primitive Church.

Again, it is worthy of observation, that the public calamities were frequently attributed to the Christians, as being an impious and detestable race of men. *Away with the Christians to the beasts; Christianos ad bestias.* This infuriated and brutal cry was very often resounded in the amphitheatres. Long were the Christians persecuted by the Emperors; from the savage Nero, who first drew the sword against them, to the time of Diocletian and Licinius.¹ They were inhumanly put to death at Rome,

But what motive could induce the apologist to make so public an exposure, contrary to the general discipline of secrecy, to which we find but this single exception recorded in history. To form a correct judgment upon the conduct of Justin, we should thoroughly understand how the writer was circumstanced. For my own part, I should be inclined to consider this first apology as a private memorial presented to the Emperor alone; he probably having called for such a declaration from the Christians. The title professing the document to be addressed to the Emperor, the Senate, and the Roman people, in no wise deters me from venturing this conjecture, since it was possibly nothing more than the usual form of petitions. In his second apology addressed to Marcus Aurelius and the Senate, he entreats him to publish it, that the world may be enabled to form an opinion upon the Christians. We find no such request in the first: from which, we may infer that he neither intended nor desired its publication. As he exposes the great mysteries of religion, which it was forbidden to publish, we are to presume, that he did not apprehend that they would be published, and that his object was, not to divulge the secret, but merely to make a confidential communication of it, to one most deserving of confidence, an excellent Prince, who was considered as a second Socrates upon the throne. The Prince does not appear to have betrayed the confidence reposed in him, for we do not find the pagans any better informed, in consequence of it. Thus the event would have justified the apologist, on the supposition that he confided the secret to Antoninus alone, with the hope, that so just and sensible a prince could terminate the bloody persecutions of the Christians, when once he became better acquainted with their real character. Although this expectation was not entirely, it was at least partially, realized. Whether it was that Antoninus did not do all that he could, or, what is perhaps more probable, could not do all that he wished, the persecutions did not entirely cease, and, on his account, we regret to find considerable numbers of martyrs in the subsequent years of his reign. This much however is certain, that he published edicts favorable to the Christians. He had received letters from various governors of provinces consulting him on the mode of treatment to be adopted in their regard, to which he replied, that they must not be molested, unless they were discovered plotting against the state. He wrote also to the cities of his empire, prohibiting the Christians to be disturbed; and by name, to Larissa, Thessalonica and Athens and to all the Greeks. Of this we are informed by the historians, Rufinus and Eusebius, and also by Melito, bishop of Sardes, in his apology addressed shortly after to Marcus Aurelius.

¹ Primum Neronem cesariano gladio ferocisse. *Tertul.*

accused indeed, but never convicted of setting fire to the city. Tacitus asserts their innocence of this crime, when he says that they perished, 'the victims of popular hatred and execration, which originated not less in calumnious imputations than in the refusal of the Christians to sacrifice to idols and to swear by the genius of the Emperors. The tribunes and governors of provinces put them to the torture, to force from them an acknowledgment of the crimes imputed to them. To this, Justin² bears positive testimony, and complains that 'to establish these calumnies, slaves, children, and women were put to the rack and tortured in the most horrible manner, to extort from them a confession of the incests and the feasting upon human flesh, of which the Christians were accused.' Call to mind the women whom Pliny interrogated on the rack after this manner: but, above all, remember the heroic Blandina and her companion Biblis: Some pagan slaves in the service of the Christians, fearing the torments endured by the faithful, and instigated by the soldiers, falsely accused the Christians of Thyestean feasts and incestuous marriages.....and of every abomination that decency forbids to mention or think upon, and which we cannot even believe men capable of committing. These calumnies being spread abroad, the popular fury was excited against us: even those who had hitherto been somewhat friendly disposed towards us, were then filled with the general indignation against us. Then was accomplished the prophecy of our Saviour, that they, who should put his disciples to death, would think that they rendered a service to God.....' Speaking afterwards of Blandina: 'We all of us, and particularly her mistress, he says, were apprehensive that she would not have the courage to confess, by reason of her bodily weakness. She however wearied out those, who one after the other, tortured her in every way, from morning till night. They acknowledged themselves vanquished, not being able to discover any other way of tormenting her: and were astonished to find her still breathing after the laceration and dislocation of her whole body..... The confession of the name of Christian seemed

to invigorate her frame: her refreshment and consolation was to exclaim: I am a Christian, and no evil is committed amongst us.¹ St. Irenæus, a contemporary, and an eye witness, mentions that she boldly and judiciously added; How can they, who, from motives of religion, abstain from meats otherwise lawful, be capable of perpetrating the crime which you allege against us?

I have before observed that, in the Zuinglian opinion, the Christians would never have suffered these calumnies to gain ground, but would have instantly upset them, by making a public declaration of all their practices and ceremonials, and by inviting the pagans to attend their assemblies and witness the celebration of their harmless repast. But supposing that this simple means of sheltering their name from infamy was overlooked; you must allow that it was high time to think of it, when punishment and torture stared them in the face. When Blandina and Biblis were interrogated respecting these pretended abominations, why did they not say: 'We take indeed a little bread and wine in memory and in figure of our absent Saviour, and also as a mark of our union together. 'This is our only repast; to which you may, if you please, yourselves bear ocular testimony?' Would they submit to torture and death, when both might be avoided by a declaration at once so natural and so likely to open the eyes of their judges? Is it consistent with any principle of reason or Christianity to maintain an obstinate and unmeaning silence upon that which could innocently be acknowledged, which there was not a shadow of a reason for concealing, and which, had it been but named, would have instantly disabused the minds of the people? Does not such conduct render a person guilty of permitting the commission of the enormities and murders, which he might so easily have prevented? Blandina however holds no such language and makes no such disclosure. In the midst of her torments, not a word of that kind escapes her lips. Her constant courageous reply is applauded by the Christians for its judiciousness. Zuinglius and

¹Letter of the Christians at Lyons to those of Asia, an: 177 under Marcus Aurelius. Euseb. V. Hist: init.

his followers would in vain attempt to explain in what the discretion and judgment of the martyr consisted. It can be satisfactorily shewn in the Catholic belief alone, in which, for the honor of Christ, and the interest and salvation of the persecutors, the mysteries were not permitted to be divulged. As it was impossible to say any thing that might betray the secret, nothing remained for the accused but modestly to repel the calumny, which was, in fact, admirably done by this illustrious slave. It is truly noble and even more than human, in the midst of protracted and horrible tortures, thus to bear in mind the wise and charitable discipline of secrecy: and the generous sacrifice of Blandina, crowned in heaven, will be a just subject of admiration to the end of time.

Such, Sir, are the observations I had to submit to your attention respecting the discipline of secrecy. I remember well, the first time I discovered it, the greater part of these same ideas confusedly rushed upon my mind. Since then, it has frequently been to me a subject of serious consideration and deep investigation. I flatter myself that my view of the subject is correct; and, if I am not mistaken, I have convinced you that it is so. For, on the one hand, it is perfectly unintelligible and inexplicable according to the Zuinglian opinion; an unmeaning discipline, rigidly enforced and scrupulously practised, without motive or reason, or rather against every motive and every urgent reason. On the other hand, it accords with the Catholic doctrine, and even supposes it; and on the supposition of this belief, is found to be wise, charitable and necessary at the period when religion was proclaimed to a world of unbelievers. In a word, since this general discipline is necessarily interwoven with our belief, and from the fifth century is traced back to the apostolic age, it is most evident, that in these first ages the Catholic dogma was both believed and taught in all Churches of the world.

APPENDIX.

DISCIPLINE OF SECRECY DURING THE FIVE FIRST AGES.

FIRST AGE.

Proofs drawn from the ignorance of the pagans respecting the Eucharist.

‘We are traduced as the most wicked of men, as capable of murdering infants and feeding on their flesh, and afterwards of abandoning ourselves to shameful incests, having previously employed some dogs, accomplices in our debaucheries, to upset the lamps and thus give darkness and audacity to our abominations.— The imputation of these crimes is to be dated from the reign of Tiberius, as I have already said. The hatred of truth commenced with truth itself: no sooner did it appear that it became the object of general detestation. It counts as many enemies as strangers, and each according to their own fashion, the Jews by jealousy, the soldiers by exaction, and all of you by nature.’*

‘One might say that Celsus was desirous of imitating the Jews, who, on the preaching of the Gospel, spread false reports against those who embraced it: that the Christians sacrificed a little infant and devoured its flesh in their assemblies; that to perform works of darkness, they put out the lamps, and then each one abandoned himself to his lusts with the first person he met. This most gross calumny for a long time made great impression on the minds of an infinity of persons, who, having no intercourse with us, permitted themselves to be persuaded that this portrait of the Christians was faithfully drawn: and even to this time there are individuals so prejudiced amongst us that they will not even enter into conversation with a Christian.’†

Eusebius writes, that ‘the devil made use of Carpocrates, Saturninus and Meander, disciples of Simon, who fell after being baptized by Philip, to seduce many of the faithful: and that by their means, they had furnished to the pagans ample materials for calumniating and blackening the Church: that all the recently invented slanders were circulated by them to the disgrace of the Christian name; and by this means has been circulated among the unbelievers an opinion respecting the Christians as absurd as it is impious: as if it was our custom to

* Calumnies against the Christians, *Tertul.* Apol. ch. vii. † Origen against Celsus, No. 294, B. VI. p. 244, edit. in 40.

abandon ourselves to shameful incests with our sisters and mothers and feed upon execrable meats.*

Tacitus, speaking of the burning of Rome, says that Nero laid it to 'a people odious by their crimes, who were called Christians.' He adds: 'This name came from Christ, whom Pontius Pilate had put to death under the Emperor Tiberius. And this impious superstition, repressed *for the time*, appeared *again*, not only in Judea, the source of the evil, but in Rome itself, where every thing that is black and infamous is collected together and put in practice. At first those only were taken, who confessed, then a great multitude, upon their report, were convicted, not so much of the burning of the city, as of hatred to all mankind.† He afterwards mentions them as wretches, who deserved the most exemplary punishments.

Pliny, who belonged to the close of the first century, but who did not enter upon the government of Bithynia before the commencement of the second, wrote to the Emperor, ‡ on occasion of the rumors spread abroad respecting the Christians, 'that he thought it necessary, for coming at the truth, to question two women on the rack, who were said to have waited in the secret assemblies. But I discover nothing, continued he, more than an ill guided and excessive superstition.'

Celsus an epicurean philosopher living at the close of the first and commencement of the second centuries, composed and published under Adrian,|| a libel against the Christians and Jews under the bold and lying title of *A True narrative*. It has not come down to us, and is only known by the splendid refutation of it from the pen of Origen, who exposes and destroys his calumnies, and, among others, those which regarded the secrecy observed by the Christians, and on account of which Celsus most bitterly inveighed against them.

SECOND AGE.

'Were we to ask our accusers whether they ever saw what they report of us, there will not be found one, impudent enough to say that he has seen it. How can they accuse those of killing and eating human creatures, who, they are well aware, cannot so much as endure to see a man even justly put to death.'§

'It will be said to us: Let every one of you destroy yourselves, and thus you will go to your God and disturb us no more.'¶ He replies that their faith in Providence forbade such an action, and he adds that 'to substantiate the calumnies heaped upon the Christians, they interrogated slaves, children and women, and put them to execruciating torments to extort from them a confession of the incests and repasts of human flesh, which were laid to the charge of the Christians. Those who accuse us of these crimes are themselves the perpetrators of them, while they attribute them to their gods: as for us, as we have nothing to do with such abominations, we do not trouble ourselves about them, having God for the witness of our actions and of our thoughts.'

In the persecution at Lyons,** the magistrates, on the deposition of some slaves, persuaded themselves that the Christians actually practised what was imputed to

* Hist. B. IV. ch. VIII. † Annals L. XV. ‡ Trajan Emperor in 98. || Adrian, Trajan's successor in 117: § Athenagoras, *Apology to Marcus Aurelius*, 166. ¶ Justin, *Apology to the same Emperor*, 166. ** Under Marcus Aurelius, 177.

them, and they endeavored, by torments, to extort from Blandina a confession of the deed: but this Christian slave boldly and judiciously answered: 'How should those who, from religious motives, abstain from meats otherwise permitted, ever be guilty of the crimes you lay to their charge?' Ecumenius has preserved this fact in a fragment of Irenæus, an eye witness and soon after Bishop of Lyons and successor to Photinus, who, after having passed his ninetieth year, suffered martyrdom in this persecution.

To this we may add what is told of the slave Biblis, as we find it related by the confessors and Christians of Lyons, in a letter written by them to the Churches of Asia to give an account of the persecutions there raging. We owe the preservation of it to Eusebius,

'I designedly omit many things, fearing to write what I could wish prudently to conceal, lest those who may read my writings should understand them in a wrong and perverted sense, and we should be accused, according to the proverb, of putting a sword into an infant's hand. 'There are certain things discoverable in the holy Scripture, although they are not clearly expressed. There will be others on which it will insist more explicitly: and others again, which it will merely touch upon; but it will endeavor so to veil, as yet to declare them; so to hide, as yet to reveal them; and so to pass them over in silence, as yet to let them appear.'*

See page 268 the passage from Tertullian, and page 269 another passage from the same writer.

And, not to omit another passage from Tertullian, † attend to the language in which he reproaches certain heretics of his time. 'Above all, they make no distinction between the catechumens and the faithful; for they are both equally admitted to hear and pray together: even the Pagans are not excluded, should they happen to be present; and thus no difficulty is made in casting bread before dogs, and pearls, though false ones, to swine.' He had already explained the intention of St. Paul, who, in confiding to Timothy the ministry of the Gospel, had commanded him to choose faithful witnesses, capable of instructing others, and not to open himself to every one indiscriminately, but according to the word of our Saviour, to avoid casting bread to the dogs or pearls before swine.

THIRD AGE.

Hear in what strains the Pagan Cecilius spoke of the Christians. ‡ 'A dark and subterraneous people, dumb in public, and speechless but in the most retired corners. Whether all our suspicions respecting them be well founded I know not: certain however it is that a nocturnal and hidden worship well befits such a tribe. And although many things are called against them, the obscurity alone of their vile religion proves them entirely or in part at least. How are we otherwise to account for this affectation and studied concealment of their worship, whatever it be? For what is virtuous and laudable courts the day, and wickedness loves darkness.'

See at page 277 another passage from Minutius Felix.

* Clem: Alex. died, 215, *Strom.*, † Book of prescription against heretics. ‡ In Minutius Felix.

‘As for the mysteries, concealed under secrecy, and known to the priests alone, not only is the animal man forbidden to approach, but those also who, although exercised and instructed, have yet not attained to the priestly honor by their merits and years; and not only are they prevented from seeing these objects any otherwise than obscurely and enigmatically, but they do not even receive them unless covered and veiled.’* This passage must allude to the prayers and words of consecration.

And again: ‘As for any other discourse which shall contain secret things and treat of the faith of God and the knowledge of things.....that is reserved to the priests alone and confided to the sons of Aaron by a perpetual succession.’†

In another homily of Origen’s, on Leviticus, we find this passage: ‘Stop not at the blood of the flesh (that is of the sheep and oxen spoken of by Moses) but learn rather to discern the blood of the Word, and hear him saying: For this is my blood, which shall be shed for you. Whosoever is imbued with the mysteries, knows the flesh and blood of the Word of God. Let us not, therefore, dwell upon a subject known to the initiated, and which the uninitiated ought not to know.’‡ See also page 268.

Zeno, bishop of Verona, in a sermon on continence, exhorts the Christian wife not to marry an unbeliever, lest such a marriage should cause her to betray the law of secrecy: *ne sis proditrix legis*. He adds: ‘And know you not that the sacrifice of the unbeliever is public, yours secret? Know you not that any one may approach his without difficulty, whereas it would be a sacrilege for Christians themselves, if they are not consecrated, to contemplate yours?’

FOURTH AGE.

‘The time admonishes us now to treat of the mysteries, and to explain the notions of the sacraments. But if, before baptism and the initiation, we had attempted to speak on these subjects we should have appeared to betray rather than explain them.’||

‘Every mystery ought to remain concealed under faithful silence, for fear that it should be rashly divulged to profane ears.’§

‘And we also have a discipline not to divulge *the prayer*, but to keep the mysteries concealed.’¶ An allusion no doubt to the prayer of consecration.

‘There are many things, which, crude, are unpalatable, but, dressed are agreeable. Concoct, then, in your heart these profound mysteries; let no premature discovery of yours confide them too crudely to delicate or perfidious ears; lest he who hears you may take alarm and turn with disgust from the meat, which, if better prepared, would have enabled him to taste the sweetness of a spiritual nourishment.’**

‘The Lord spoke in parables to his hearers in general: but to his disciples he explained in private the parables and comparisons he made use of in public. The splendor of glory is for those who are already enlightened: obscurity and dark-

* Origin, Hom. IV. on Ch. III. of Numbers. † Hom. XIII, on Ch. XXXIII, of Leviticus. ‡ Hom. IX, on Lev. t. No. 10. || St. Ambrose, *Book of the mysteries for the uninitiated*, Ch. I. No. 2. § The same, B. I. on *Abraham*, Ch. V. No. 38. ¶ The same, Ch. IX. No. 35, on *Cain and Abel*. ** *Ibidem* No. 37.

ness is the portion of unbelievers. Just so, the Church discovers its sacraments, to those who leave the class of catechumens: for we declare not to the gentiles the hidden mysteries of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, nor do we speak openly of the mysteries to the catechumens: but we frequently employ obscure expressions, that they may be understood by those, who are already instructed, and that the uninstructed may not be injured by them.*

I now present you with a very curious note which St. Cyril has put to the end of the preface to his *Catechetical Discourses*, in which he is known to have explained, in the clearest manner possible, the doctrine of the Church on the Sacraments, particularly on the Eucharist. They were intended for the instruction of those who were about to receive baptism, and afterwards to participate in the sacrifice and the communion of the altar. The note, addressed to the reader, is conceived in these terms: 'Procure that these Catechetical discourses be read, by those for whose instruction they have been composed, viz: by those who are approaching the sacrament of baptism, and by the faithful who have already received it. But do not communicate them to the catechumens and those who are not Christians. If you do, you will have to answer to God for it. And if you take a copy of them, do it, I conjure you, in the presence of God.

'They are not ashamed to celebrate the mysteries before the catechumens, and perhaps even before pagans, forgetting that it is written that we are to conceal the mystery of the king: and regardless of the precept of the Lord, that we must not cast holy things to the dogs, or pearls before swine. For it is unlawful to lay the mysteries open to the uninitiated, lest through ignorance they should turn them to ridicule, and lest the catechumens should become scandalized through an indiscreet curiosity.†

'This is what the uninitiated are forbidden to contemplate, and how should it ever be becoming to write and circulate an account of them among the people.‡

'The Apostles and the Fathers, who, from the beginning have presented certain rites to the Church, knew how to secure a becoming dignity to the mysteries by the secrecy and silence in which they have enveloped them.¶ Here we have this discipline of secrecy and silence positively attributed to the apostles by the learned prelate.

St. Epiphanius reproaches the Marcionites of the island of Cyprus, that they were so rash as to celebrate the mysteries before the catechumens.‡

St. Gregory Nazianzen ¶ says that 'the greatest part of our mysteries ought not to be exposed to strangers.** He says further that '*men should rather give their blood than publish them.*††

'He who is to receive ordination requests the prayers of the faithful; these give him their suffrage and add the acclamations known by those initiated in the mysteries, and which I here pass over the silence, for it is forbidden to say every thing before the profane..... They who cannot approach the holy table are withheld and banished from the sacred rails.‡‡

Gaudentius, bishop of Brescia in Italy, contemporary with Cyril of Jerusalem,

* St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. VI. † Synod of Alexandria, an. 340; speaking of the Meletians in the Apology of St. Athanasius. ‡ St. Basil, bishop of Cesarea, died in 379. ¶ On the Holy Ghost, Ch. XXVII, No. 66. § St. Epiph: Hæres, XLII. ¶ Died in 389. ** Orat. XLII. †† Orat. XXXV. ‡‡ St. Chrysostom, Hom. XVIII. on II. Cor.

preaching on Easter night, before the Neophytes, on their return from the baptismal fonts, said: 'In the lesson you have just heard, I shall select only those parts which may not be explained in the presence of the catechumens, but which must be discovered to the neophytes.'*

Treating again the same subject, he observes that he had put off until the paschal discourses 'to speak of the ceremonies described in Exodus, on the manner of celebrating the paschal solemnity, because, adds he, this splendid night requires our instruction to be adapted rather to the circumstances of the time, than to the lesson of the day, in order that the neophytes may, *for the first time*, be taught in what manner we partake of the paschal sacrifice.†

The author of the apostolical Constitutions, who assumes the name of Clement, disciple and successor of St. Peter, but whom critics place in the fourth century, expresses himself in the 85th canon as follows: 'These Constitutions, which I, Clement, have drawn up for you bishops, must on no account be communicated to all sorts of persons, because of the mysteries contained in them.‡

'Ask a catechumen whether he eats the flesh of the Son of man and drinks his blood, he knows not what you mean..... The catechumens do not know what the Christians receive. The manner in which the flesh of the Lord is eaten is concealed from the catechumens.‡

'They who know the Scripture understand perfectly well what Melchisedeck offered when he blessed Abraham. We must not here make mention of it, because of the catechumens: the faithful however discover it.‡

'We have dismissed the catechumens and retained only you, to discourse to you respecting the mysteries, which the initiated alone are allowed to hear spoken of.‡

'What is this God, said Maximus of Medaurus, what is this God which you Christians consider as particularly belonging to yourselves and which you say you see present in your secret places? *Et in locis abditis presentem vos videre componitis?** This question put to St. Augustine proves that the essence of the mystery was concealed from the pagans, and that there existed a report among them that the Christians adored in their secret assemblies a God as present and visible.

FIFTH AGE.

In the dialogue entitled *the Immutable*,†† he introduces Orthodoxus speaking thus: 'Reply to me, if you please, in mystical and obscure terms: it is possible there may be present some who are not initiated in the mysteries.' (He means to say that this writing intended for the public, might fall into the hands of the uninitiated, and so betray the secret.) Eranistes: 'I shall understand you, and reply to you according to that.' And again, a little after: 'You have clearly proved what you wished; although in mysterious words.'

'In the second dialogue, Orthodoxus replies, to this question. By what name do you call, before the priestly consecration, the gift that is offered? It must

*Gaudentius *Serm. ad Neoph.* †Treatise V. ‡Constit. Apost. can. 85. || St. Augustine, Treatise II. on St. John. §The same, *Serm. X.* ¶The same, *Serm. I. in apendicent.* **The same, *Epist. XLIII.* ††Theodoret.

not be said openly, because it may happen that we should be heard by uninitiated persons.' Eranistes: 'Reply then in covert terms, if you please.'

'The poor shall eat and shall be satisfied: not all indeed, for all have not obeyed the Gospel; but those who have had the divine love in their heart: it is concerning these that the Royal prophet said that their hunger and thirst should be satisfied, by the immortal nourishment that they should receive. Now, this divine nourishment is known to us with the doctrine of the spirit: and the mystic and immortal repast is well known by all those who have been initiated in the mysteries.'*

Innocent I, consulted by Decentius, bishop of Eugubio, on the sacraments, replies on the subject of the pax which some priests wished to give one another, before the consecration: 'The ceremony of the pax absolutely ought not to take place until after the things which I cannot reveal..... As for the rest, which it is unlawful for me to write, we can discuss them together when you arrive.

* The same, Com. on Ps. XXI.

LETTER IX.

Second general proof, drawn from the Liturgies.

THE Church has nothing to present us in her public worship so admirable as the sacrament of the Eucharist. The greater part of the other sacraments have reference to this, and prepare us for it. The greater part of the offices and ceremonies of the Church are but so many means or preparations either for the worthy celebration or participation of it. The Eucharist is the principal object here below of the thoughts and desires of the true Christian: it is the nourishment of his piety, the recompense of his labors, the consolation of his exile and earthly pilgrimage, his strength in dangers and afflictions, and even at approach of death; it is in fine the pledge of his glorious resurrection. By representing our divine Mediator dying for the salvation of the world, it displays the greatest benefit we have received, the benefit on which rests our hopes of salvation. His bloody immolation took place on the cross: the oblation is renewed upon our altars, and will to the end of time continue to be the sole sacrifice of the new law, having taken the place of all the ancient sacrifices, from henceforth being the only one agreeable to the Supreme Being.

The prayers preparatory to this sublime act of religion, those which produce the consecration of the bread and wine, those which follow, those which accompany the distribution of the Eucharist, the acts of thanksgiving by which all is terminated, together with the rites and ceremonies employed throughout, compose what is here called the liturgy. The first liturgy was undoubtedly drawn up by the apostles according to instructions given them by their master, and celebrated by them in the assemblies which they held at Jerusalem till the time of their dispersion. St. James, who remained in charge over that Church, and who governed it for twenty-nine years, continued to administer the Eucharist there, according to the form he had observed in common with all the apostles: those who had carried it with

them into the countries which they traversed, communicated it to the bishops and priests whom they ordained, and established it in the Churches where they fixed their sees. Antiquity will soon give us to understand this: for the present it may be sufficient to observe that the power of offering the bread and the chalice is the essence of the priesthood and its most eminent prerogative, and that its use is essentially obligatory upon the evangelical ministry.

The most ancient monuments effectually bear testimony that the liturgy was in use wherever the religion of Christ was preached and established. Of this Pliny¹ informs us, indistinctly 'tis true, but according to his means of information, when he relates that the Christians assembled on certain days before sun-rise, sung hymns to Christ as to a God, bound themselves by mutual engagements, not to any crime, but to refrain from thefts, robbery, adultery, from breaking their promise, or betraying the trust reposed in them; and that they partook together of an innocent repast.

Justin² goes into many details: he mentions that the assemblies were held every Sunday before day break; that the bishop presided in them: that they joined in prayer, and then in reading the prophets and apostles, which he, who presided, afterwards explained, exhorting the faithful to practice the beautiful instructions they had heard. He also mentions that the faithful rose and prayed, after the sermon, and saluted one another with the kiss of peace; that they presented the bread and wine to the presiding prelate, who offered up long prayers over the gifts that were offered, to which prayers the people answered *Amen*: that the deacons distributed the things sacrificed to those who were present, and carried them out to those who could not attend, &c. Justin does not give us the prayers recited by the president; he is satisfied with mentioning their effect, which was to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The description he gives of every thing that passed in these secret assemblies exactly corresponds with the order of the liturgies.

¹ Letter to Trajan. ² First Apology.

Irenæus, a disciple of St. Polycarp, who himself had been a disciple of St. John, informs us that the liturgy came from Jesus Christ and his apostles. 'Our Lord, says he, taught the new oblation of his new Testament; the Church has received it from the apostles, and presents it to God throughout the world.'¹ These words are decisive: they shew that in the first and second century the liturgy was considered of apostolical and divine institution: Irenæus adds that this oblation was the same that Malachy had predicted, and which, putting an end to all other sacrifices, was alone to prevail from the rising to the setting of the sun.

St. Cyprian complains of the schismatics, 'who, slighting and abandoning the bishops, raise altar against altar, make up a different prayer composed of unlawful words, and profane by false sacrifices the truth of the divine victim.'² We are then to conclude that there were essential forms of prayer, to be learned only from the bishops, and not to be suppressed or changed by any one whatsoever. 'For, continues St. Cyprian, to oppose the established order, is to oppose the ordinance of God and incur his indignation.' Here is a clear testimony that the essential prayers of the liturgy were traced to the institution of the apostles of Jesus Christ,

Firmilian, bishop of Cesarea, wrote to St. Cyprian, that twenty-two years before, a woman had deceived many of the faithful, even so far as to persuade them that she consecrated the Eucharist; for she often had dared to make appearance of sanctifying the bread by an *invocation by no means contemptible*, and of offering the sacrifice to the Lord *with the secret of the accustomed prayer*; so that she *seemed in nothing to swerve from the ecclesiastical rule*.³ Firmilian says that this unfortunate creature had seduced a priest, which accounts for her discovery of the prayers of consecration. This fact proves that there was a fixed formulary for the holy mysteries, that the priests alone were in

¹ Against heresies, B. IV. ch. XXXII. ² Book on Unity. ³ In St. Cyprian, Letter 75.

possession of it, and that it was the rule or *canon* from which it was unlawful to swerve.

St. Epiphanius¹ who bears testimony to the tradition of his time, that is of the fourth century, declares as follows: ‘Peter, Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas, Thaddeus and James the son of Alpheus, and Judas the son of James and Simon the Chananean, and Matthias chosen to fill up the number of the twelve, were all chosen apostles to preach the holy gospel in the world with Paul and Barnabas and others: and they have been the ordainers of the mysteries with James, brother of our Lord, and the first bishop of Jerusalem.’ Here is a positive and indisputable fact: it is beyond doubt that in the time of Epiphanius the institution and order of the liturgies in use were attributed to the apostles, at least as to the essential part.

We can have no stronger warrant or evidence than that given by St. Epiphanius, who, being a native of Palestine, had applied closely, in solitude, to the study of sacred and profane authors, and was afterwards raised to the bishoprick of Salamis in Cyprus, where he died in 403, at the advanced age of ninety-three. He here makes special mention of St. James, as the first bishop of Jerusalem, because the apostles, having begun to celebrate the liturgy together in that city must have proceeded regularly to compose and arrange the prayers, and decide as to what was essential. To this they would all conform of one common accord at Jerusalem, and each one separately, after the dispersion, would continue the same, in the Churches they established during the course of their preaching, and also in those where they eventually fixed their seas.

The author of the *Apostolical Constitutions*, who wrote about the middle of the fourth century, declares, in positive terms, that the liturgy came from St. James.

St. Augustine teaches² that we must refer to the rites of the sacrifice that which St. Paul prescribed to Timothy, in these terms: ‘I desire therefore, first of all, that invocations, prayers,

¹ *Hæres.* 79. No. 3. ² Epistle 59 to Paulinus.

supplications and thanksgivings be made for all men.¹ For, says St. Augustine, by *invocations*, the apostle here understands those that are made in the celebration of the sacred rites, before that which is on the table of the Lord is blessed; by *prayers*, he understands those that are said, when it is blessed, sanctified and broken for distribution, and which are ended by the Lord's prayer almost throughout the whole Church: by *supplications* he understands those pronounced by the bishops when they bless the people; and by thanksgivings those with which we finish the liturgy. You will tell me that St. Augustine speaks not here as witness, but as a private divine. True: it forms part of an opinion, of a method peculiar to himself of understanding and applying this passage of St. Paul. If however you reflect a moment, you will perceive that even this opinion supposes that in his time the liturgy then used was generally attributed to the apostles: for, if it had not been so attributed, if it had been generally considered as of later origin, it would have been most evident to every one that St. Paul could never have alluded to it when writing to Timothy: and St. Augustine would not probably have thrown away his labor in pursuing an imaginary and fantastical allusion, by applying the words of the apostle to the different parts of a liturgy of which he could have had no knowledge. The connexion which the great bishop of Hippo discovers and explains between the one and the other, supposes then that in his time it was considered that the liturgy, as celebrated in Africa, had been known to the apostles, in all essential points, and this is all the conclusion I wish to draw from it at present.

The ancient author of a work falsely attributed to Proclus of Constantinople affirms, that 'The apostles after the ascension of Jesus Christ, before their dispersion, with one accord betook themselves to prayer for days together, and, as they enjoyed great consolation in the mystical sacrifice of the body of our Lord, they celebrated mass with many prayers.'²

St. Celestin in opposing the errors of the Pelagians, referred to the ancient forms of prayer used in all the Churches of the

¹ 1 Tim. ii 1. ² Fragment on the tradition of the mass.

world, and which he attributed to the apostles. 'Let us consult these sacerdotal and mysterious collects, which transmitted by the apostles to the whole world, are uniformly recited in the universal Church, so that the rule of our prayers becomes that of our faith.'¹ What are these collects and prayers? Celestin enumerates them at length. They are precisely the same that are every where said by us on Good Friday, for the unbelievers, Jews, heretics, &c

Here would be the place to set before you, in succession the belief of the principal Churches respecting the apostolicity of their liturgies: but, fearful of fatiguing your attention, I deem it more advisable to refer you for their full development and detail to the end of this letter;² you will there discover the great national Churches referring each their respective liturgy to one or other of the apostles, from whom it had received, together with its faith, its form of public worship.

I now come to some indispensable observations previous to my laying the liturgies open before you and before I develop those decisive consequences, which I intend to draw from them. If in the beginning the apostles had drawn up a liturgy with their own hands, it would have been ranked among the inspired and canonical writings: not a syllable could have been added or retrenched; it would have formed the constant, immutable law of the universal Church; all would have been uniformity, even to a word, in the prayers and also in the ceremonies instituted to accompany the recitation. The arcane discipline, established by the apostles themselves, permitted them not to mark it out by writing, any more than the formularies employed in the administration of the other sacraments. To give to each a copy of them would have been exposing them too much: there remained no other means of securing the transmission of them to posterity, than to intrust them to the zeal and the memory of their disciples, the bishops and priests, until Providence should please to grant the Church more favorable times. This was the plan determined upon by the apostles, and adopted by

¹ *Epistle to the Bishops of Gaul*, ch. xi. in 423. ² Consult the Appendix.

their successors. Of this I will give you a few satisfactory proofs. First, you will have remarked that among all the authors who have attributed the liturgies to the apostles, not one pretends to say that the apostles ever *wrote* them: they all suppose the contrary, and some positively declare it. St. Justin says that the presiding minister prayed at great length, as much even as he was able. The whole of the prayer therefore was not fixed and determined; the formulary was not of so definite and determinate a character as to admit of no prolongation or curtailment. Tertullian clearly testifies that the formularies of the sacraments and the manner of administering them were only known by unwritten tradition.¹ ‘Mysteries should not be committed to writing, said Origen. *Mysteria chartis non committenda.*’ Had the liturgy been written in the time of St. Cyprian, he would certainly have availed himself of it, to shew that wine was to be mixed with water in the chalice, against those whom he rebukes, and who through ignorance or simplicity offered only water. ‘We must follow, said he, in every particular the evangelical law, and the divine tradition.’² The gospel informs us that there was wine in the chalice which our Lord consecrated; and we know by tradition that this wine was mixed with water. St. Basil most expressly asserts what Tertullian evidently insinuates. ‘Which of the saints was it, says he, that has left us in writing the words of invocation to consecrate the bread of the Eucharist and the cup of benediction? For we do not confine ourselves to the words given in the apostle and in the gospel; we add others both before and after, as being very efficacious for the mysteries, and which have not been written.’³

When in the persecution of Diocletian, the tyrant’s officers demanded the surrender of all the sacred books and whatever was employed in the service of the Churches, the traditor bishops replied; ‘The lectors have all the books: for our parts, what we have here, we give you.’ They were the sacred vessels which they blushed not to produce. The lectors had charge of books, from which they read to the assembled Christians: now these lec-

¹ De corona militis. ² Epist. ad Cecil. ³ *Book on the Holy Spirit.*

tors never recited the prayers of the liturgy, they therefore could not possess them : and since these traditor bishops asserted that there were no other books besides those entrusted to the care of the lectors, it is evident that the liturgies were not written. A later fact proves this more clearly still.¹ The Emperor Constantine, perceiving that the number of the Christians had greatly increased, was desirous that the new Churches, raised in consequence of this vast increase, should be supplied with the books necessary for the divine service : he wrote to Eusebius of Cæsarea, enjoining him to procure fifty new copies of the Bible. Nothing was said about liturgies, although they would have been necessary to the service of the new Churches, equally as much as the Bible and the other things with which Constantine caused them to be supplied.

Can you account for this reserve, Sir? Can you explain why they were so fearful of committing the liturgy to paper? This question, you must allow, would have now embarrassed you, had it not been put to you before, at an earlier stage of this discussion. Indeed, it is impossible, according to the notions of the Calvinists and Zuinglians, to account for this ancient observance. The prayers of invocation would not have borne, indeed could not bear any other sense than to ask of God to make the bread and wine, vile and common creatures, become the sign and figure, the emblem or memorial of the body and blood of Jesus Christ present in heaven, but absent from the earth : Now this petition is so simple and natural, so perfectly coinciding with the ideas, and suited to the taste of all mankind, that there could have been no possible motive for its concealment, but contrariwise every reason in the world for its manifestation. Reflect here upon what has been said respecting the discipline of secrecy in general : the arguments there suggested by the subject return here upon us in their full force, and most naturally explain the extreme reserve of the Church in regard to the prayers composing the liturgy.

But, you will say, it being once granted, that, for several

¹ David Clarkson, *on the liturgies.*

centuries, the liturgies were not written, it must follow of course that there was no fixed and determined formulary for the celebration of the holy mysteries, and that it is an error to attribute to the apostles the institution of the liturgies, such as we now have them in writing.

This objection is partially, but by no means entirely founded on truth: as I hope soon to convince you. To come to a better understanding of the matter, a little explanation will be necessary.

1. You know that the formulary of faith was for many ages preserved among the Christians without the help of the scriptures. 'The symbol of our faith and of our hope comes to us from the apostles, and is not written, said St. Jerome.'¹ No one writes the symbol, says St. Augustine, and it is not to be read. Repeat it in your mind, each day, rising and retiring to rest; your memory must be your book. *Sit vobis codex memoria vestra.*² The like is to be said of the prayers of the liturgy. They were faithfully preserved in the memory of the bishops and priests, as was the symbol in the memory of the faithful: in both cases, their memories were their books. This living rule was held to be established by Jesus Christ and his apostles: Hence the ancient usage of obliging the priests to learn the liturgy by heart: which custom is scrupulously recommended and observed among the Copts. This precaution of not writing the symbol, the formularies of the sacraments and the prayer of consecration owed its origin to the general discipline of secrecy, and ended together with it, about the time of the council of Ephesus, in 431.³

¹ Epist. ad Pam. ² Discourse to the Catechumens, on the symbol. ³ There was then no longer any reason for fearing that the mysteries should fall into the hands of the pagans, because the Emperors having embraced Christianity, the faithful were no longer compelled to give up the Scriptures. Now therefore was the time to commit the symbol and the liturgy to writing. All most all the Churches must have determined upon it, because the number of the Christians increasing to an infinite extent, and that of the priests augmenting in proportion, it could no longer be expected that they should all be as fervent and enlightened as they were in and after the time of St. Justin, so as themselves to make suitable

2. I have one simple remark to make to you, and greatly should I rejoice were it to catch the eye of all those, who call in question the apostolic origin of the liturgies. All the fathers who for the four first ages make mention of the liturgies, before they were committed to writing, and all those who had occasion afterwards to speak of them, are of one mind in attributing their institution to the apostles. Of this we have supplied the proofs. What is the language held now a-days? You, Sir, and your contradictory compeers, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries first begin to call in question the ancient origin of the liturgies. In sober seriousness, do you pretend to put your opinion in competition with testimony of the whole Christian world, during the first six centuries? Have you any historical information bearing on this fact, which was unknown to the ancients? Are you not at so great a distance from those times, and were not they so near them, that their testimony must evidently be preferred before the judgment you venture to form? They belonged to the primitive times, the greater number of them were connected with the very origin of things by a very few intermediate links;¹ the tradition if it was at least fresh and vigorous; and would you,

prayers adapted to persons and times, or that they should all have memories to learn and remember these prayers, without the possibility of ever reading them in a book. Le Brun sur les liturgies, tom. II. p. 132, edit. in 8.

Up to this time we discover no trace of written liturgies, with the single exception of the book of the apostolic Constitutions, falsely attributed to pope Clement, but the real author of which is supposed by the best critics to have lived some time in the fourth century, between St. Basil and Nectarius, that is, between 370 and 390. The liturgy is given in an abridged form in the 2nd book and at full length in the 8th.

The 85th canon is very remarkable: 'These constitutions reduced into eight books by me, Clement, for you a bishop, must on no account be divulged, because of the mysteries they contain.' In the fourth age therefore they seemed to think that the discipline of secrecy was established from the beginning: they must therefore have been convinced that the liturgies were derived from the apostles, since the digesting of them is here attributed to Clement, the disciple and successor of St. Peter; and since in the eighth book the author positively declares that his liturgy came from St. James.

¹ At Lyons, for example, in 204, there was but one intermediate link between Irenæus and St. John, Pothinus who could have known him, because he was 15 years of age when that apostle died, or Polycarp who had been his disciple.

who come fourteen or fifteen centuries after them, throw doubt, suspicions and uncertainty around their positive persuasion and unanimous deposition? Certainly it is now your greatest interest to divest the liturgies, if possible, of their apostolic origin, because in them you read your condemnation: but in former times men had no interest either in contesting their real origin or in palming a false one upon them. Catholics, heretics and schismatics were all agreed upon this fact. There was no dispute, nor reproach on either side. The conviction of all was equally strong—the belief universal. In your opinion, which of these two deserve the most credit? Would any tribunal, any unprejudiced person lay more stress upon the doubts of a few persons of the eighteenth century, than upon the positive affirmation of all the Christian Churches of antiquity, respecting a fact much more easily ascertained and of the first importance in those times, because it was every where intimately connected with the habitual celebration of the holy mysteries?

3. Again, when we attribute the liturgies to the apostles, we do it as to their substance but not as to every particular part and portion of them. Every book of common usage, every collection of prayers and ceremonies is subject to change. What is adapted to one time may not be so to another. Public worship could not be the same during times of persecution as in the days of peace, neither could the mass be celebrated in subterraneous vaults, or in prison, with the same pomp and on the same grand scale as they afterwards were in magnificent temples and basilicks. Particular circumstances, local calamities, or feasts newly established required new and appropriate prayers. The prefaces and collects composed to commemorate the apostles were naturally posterior to them and drawn up by a more recent hand: the abrogation of public penances under Nectarius, in 390, must necessarily have struck out from the liturgy whatever was connected with the penitents. In short it is not surprising that there should have been many variations in the liturgies of different Churches, before they were written, it being certain that new variations have appeared since they were committed to writing.

These changes and alterations only took place in the variable and accidental part of the liturgy, the substance always remaining the same. And even this substance must not be considered as remaining word for word the same, since it has been translated into many languages. It was the sense that was always to be attended to, the sense that was to be preserved unvaried through all the Churches, and which is actually found the same in all the liturgies.

4. And here I solicit your increased attention till the conclusion of my proof. It is acknowledged that the Apostles had instituted the liturgies: we find, before and after their publication, the most respectable authorities concurring to the certification of this fact; witness Irenæus, disciple of St. John, by one intermediate gradation: Firmilian, bishop of Cesarea, for Asia and the Gauls: Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, for Africa; St. Cyril for Palestine; St. Epiphanius, St. Basil, for the Islands and Greece: the fragment of Proclus for Constantinople: Celestin I, and Innocent I, for Rome and Italy: and after their publication, the popes Gelasius and Vigilius, Isadore of Seville, Hilduinus of St. Denis, for Italy, Spain and Gaul: the author of the Apostolic Constitutions, Leontius of Byzantium, for Greece; Athanasius and Rufinus for Ethiopia; the ancient Copts for Egypt; the Nestorians, Eutychians and Jacobites, for Syria, Armenia, Assyria, Persia and India. As a matter of history it is beyond dispute that the liturgies were instituted by the apostles. But how are we to ascertain what is derived from this source and what is not? Nothing is more easy. When once the apostles taught by what prayers the mysteries were to be celebrated, these prayers was necessarily to be religiously observed by their disciples and successors, to be regarded as essential, and to pass from age to age, as the rule or canon, from which it would never be lawful to depart, except as far as might regard the arrangement of terms, but never so far as to change the sense and substance of the words given by the apostles. Hence it will follow that all the liturgies of the world, when first committed to writing, must have expressed the sense and substance of those apostolic prayers,

and that, whatever variety might exist in accidentals, the leading features of resemblance must be discernable in them all, and if I may use the expression, a family likeness indicative of their common origin.

If then it should be found that in the midst of variations that a long series of ages, a variety of events and the peculiar idioms of different Churches may well be supposed to have rendered unavoidable; if it should be found, I say, that, notwithstanding, all the liturgies agree together as to their sense and substance, in the prayers that precede, accompany and follow the consecration, and if those prayers should be found clearly to express the real presence, transubstantiation, adoration and sacrifice, we must conclude that this uniformity, in every essential part of the liturgy, would denote an apostolic origin: for it would be impossible to account for such uniformity on any other supposition. No other cause can be discovered sufficiently preponderating and universal to unite in this manner all the Churches of the world in one common sentiment, in a firm adherence to the same dogmas, and invariably an equally scrupulous attention to professing them in the same circumstances. There exists no council to the intervention or agency of which this singular uniformity can be ascribed: in fact no council how general soever could have sufficed for the purpose, since the heretics would never have followed its decisions, and the schismatical societies of the fourth and fifth ages, no less hostile to each other than to the Mother Church, would never have come to an agreement to adopt formularies of prayers, and professions of faith, drawn up by a general council. Consequently, nothing less than the institution of the apostles and their authority, equally respected by all, could reasonably account for such a uniformity, if it actually existed in the Christian liturgies, written in the fourth and fifth centuries. Now I will engage to prove to you, in the most palpable manner, that all the liturgies of these times, not only those used in the Catholic Churches, but also those adopted in the schismatical and heretical societies, perfectly without exception agree in the prayers that precede, accompany and follow the consecration,

and that they express in the clearest and most energetic terms the belief of the sacrifice, the real presence, transubstantiation and adoration. We are now dealing with a fact of most easy demonstration: a fact established by authentic citations drawn from all these liturgies. I will collect them together and make them pass in review before you.

We offer to thee our King and our God, this bread and this chalice, according to the ordinance of our Saviour, giving thee thanks through him for that thou hast vouchsafed to let us exercise the priesthood in thy presence. We beseech thee favorably to regard these gifts in honor of Jesus Christ, and to send down upon this sacrifice thy Holy Spirit, bearing testimony to the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, in order that he may make this bread become the body of thy Christ, and the chalice his blood: we offer thee &c.’¹ The prayers are long and very beautiful.

At the time of communion, the people exclaim: ‘Hosannah to the Son of David, blessed be the Lord God who cometh in the name of the Lord, and who has shewn himself to us.’ The rubrick adds: ‘The bishop gives the Eucharist saying: *It is the body of Jesus Christ.* The receiver answers. *Amen.* The deacon gives the chalice saying: *It is the blood of Jesus Christ; the chalice of life;* and he who drinks, answers *Amen.* And after the communion the deacon begins an act of thanksgiving, and says; after having received the precious body and precious blood of Jesus Christ, let us return thanks to him who makes us partakers of his holy mysteries.’ The bishop concludes by a most solemn prayer.

In the liturgy, rather referred to than transcribed at length, in the second book, we read simply this: ‘The benediction is followed by the sacrifice, during which all the people must remain standing, and pray in silence: and after it is offered, each in his turn must receive the body and blood of the Lord, approaching *with a reverence and a fear due to the body of the King.*’

Vouchsafe, O God! we beseech thee, to make this oblation in all things blessed, acceptable, ratified, *reasonable*, and pleasing;

¹ Liturgy taken from Book VIII of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, written in the fourth century.

that it may *become* for us the body and blood of thy well beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.' And after the consecration: 'We offer to thy supreme Majesty, of thy gifts and benefits a *pure host, a holy host, an unspotted host*, the holy bread of eternal life and the chalice of everlasting salvation.' And at the moment of communion, the priest, bowing down in the sentiment of *adoration* and *profound humility*, addresses himself to Jesus Christ, *whom he holds in his hands*, and says to him thrice; 'Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, say but the word and my soul shall be healed.' And when he gives the holy communion, as also when he receives it himself, he again declares it to be the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹

Such was the language of the liturgy that was introduced into the British Isles in 595, and which up to the sixteenth century was universally celebrated in England, Ireland and Scotland, as it has been now for many centuries in France, Germany and Spain, and in every country of the world, where latin priests are to be found.

It would be superfluous to introduce here the ancient Spanish liturgy, since we know, among others, from the learned Isidore, successor of Leander, his brother, to the see of Seville in 600, that, in the canon and every essential part of the mass, it was conformable with the Roman liturgy, from which we have just been making an extract.

We have unfortunately no manuscript, nor monument describing the liturgy of Gaul to us at full length and unmixed with other subjects. There is extant an abridged exposition of the mass composed by St. Germanus of Paris, about the middle of the sixth century. With the help of this little treatise and of what we find in the works of St. Gregory of Tours, who lived a few years after St. Germanus, we are enabled to arrive at a tolerably exact knowledge of the ancient order of the Gallican mass, and by the same means it is that the learned discover that it has more connexion and similarity with the oriental than with the Roman liturgy.

¹ Roman Liturgy, according to the *Sacramentaries* of Gelasius.

Now St. Germanus, speaking of the gifts laid upon the altar, says: ‘The *bread is transformed* into the body, and the wine into blood, the Lord having said of the bread, this is my body, and of the wine, this is my blood..... The oblation is consecrated on the paten..... The angel of God descends upon the altar, as upon the monument, and blesses the *host*. Whilst the fraction is made, the clergy, in a suppliant posture, shall sing the anthem: vouchsafe, we humbly beseech thee, to receive this sacrifice, to bless and sanctify it, that it may become for us a legitimate Eucharist in thy name, and in the name of thy Son and of thy Holy Spirit, *being transformed into the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.*’¹

May the consoling spirit of thy benediction, thy eternal co-operator, descend O my God, on these sacrifices, to the end that this aliment having been *transformed* into body, this chalice into blood, what we have offered for our sins, may save us by its merits. *Ut translata fruge* in corpore, calice in cruore, proficiat meritis quod obtulimus pro delictis.’²

Praying by our fervent supplications, that he who changes water into wine may *convert into blood* the wine which we offer.’³

The Gothic Gallican Missal of the end of the seventh century contains a prayer to God in the form of invocation: ‘That thou mayest vouchsafe to regard with a gracious eye these gifts presented upon thy altar, and that the Holy Spirit of thy Son may overshadow them.’ And again this prayer after the consecration: ‘We being mindful of the passion and resurrection of our most glorious Lord, offer to thee, O God, *this spotless host, this reasonable host, this unbloody host.*’ Again the following prayer before communion: ‘Completing the sacred solemnities that we have offered to thee according to the order of the high priest Melchisedek, we devoutly beseech thee, O eternal Majesty, for the grace to receive *this bread changed into flesh* by the operation of thy virtue, and this drink *changed into blood*, and to drink in the chalice the same blood that flowed from thy side on the cross.’

¹ Gallican Liturgy: Mass of the Circumcision. ² Mass of the Assumption.

³ At the Epiphany. ⁴ St. James’s Liturgy or the Liturgy of Jerusalem

The priest takes the bread and says of Jesus Christ: ' Taking the bread into his holy, immaculate and immortal hands, raising his eyes to heaven, shewing it to Thee O God, his Father, he gave thanks, blessed, broke, and gave it to us, his disciples and apostles, saying: Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you, and for the remission of sins: (the people answered *amen.*) In like manner, after he had supped, taking the chalice, and mixing the wine with water, looking up to Heaven, and offering it to Thee, O God, his Father, he gave thanks, he sanctified, and blessed it and filled it with the Holy Ghost, and gave it to us his disciples, saying: drink ye all of this: This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, and which is given for the remission of sins. *Ans.* Amen.' And further on: ' We offer thee, O Lord, this tremendous and unbloody *sacrifice* ' and again: ' This life-giving Spirit, who reigneth with thee, who is consubstantial and coeternal with thee, O God, the Father, and with thine only begotten Son, who spoke by the law, by the prophets and by thy New Testament, who appeared and descended, in the form of a dove, upon our Lord, Jesus Christ, in the river Jordon; who came down, in the shape of fiery tongues, on thine apostles, when assembled in a room at holy and glorious Sion. Send down at present, this most holy Spirit on us and upon these holy, kind and glorious presence, *may make this bread the holy body of Jesus Christ.* *Ans:* Amen. And this chalice the precious blood of Jesus Christ. *Ans:* Amen.' Before the communion the priest addresses himself to Jesus Christ upon the altar as follows: ' O Lord, my God, who art the bread of heaven and the life of the world, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and I am not worthy to partake of thy most immaculate mysteries: but grant, by thy divine mercy, that thy grace may make me worthy to receive thy sacred body and precious blood, without incurring condemnation, but for the remission of my sins and everlasting life.' At the communion of the people, the Deacon says: ' Draw near *with fear, with faith and with love.*' The people answer: Blessed is he, who cometh in the name of the Lord.'

‘Receive us at thy holy altar,’ says the priest at the oblation, ‘according to thy great mercy; and make us worthy to offer thee this *reasonable and unbloody sacrifice*, for our sins and for all the ignorance of the people.....’¹ After the words of consecration, which are not passed over in any liturgy with which I am acquainted, the priest bowing down, says in a low voice: ‘We offer to thee this reasonable and unbloody worship, and we beseech thee to send down thy holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts: *make this bread the precious body of thy Christ*; (the deacon answers *Amen*.) And what is in this chalice, the precious blood of thy Christ, (the deacon answers *amen*,) *changing* them by the holy Spirit.’ The deacon answers, *Amen, amen, amen*. Further on, the priest addresses himself to Jesus Christ, and says: O Jesus Christ, our God, look down upon us, from thy holy mansion, and the throne of glory in thy kingdom: thou, who dwellest in the highest heavens, with the Father, and *who art invisibly present with us here below*, render us worthy, by thy mighty hand to partake of thy immaculate body and precious blood, and to distribute it to all thy people.’ The priest and the deacon keep themselves in a posture of *adoration*, and both repeat three times: ‘Lord be merciful to me a sinner:’ ‘the people adore in like manner..... Towards the communion the priest says to the deacon: ‘deacon draw near:’ he draws near and *bows down with reverence* before the priest, who holds a particle of the blessed host in his hand, and the deacon says, ‘Father, give me the holy and precious body of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.’ The priest gives it into his hand, and says: ‘I do give thee the precious, holy, and most immaculate body of the Lord God our Saviour Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins and eternal life.’

Then the deacon bowing down near the altar, prays in the same manner that the priest does, who takes the blessed host, saying: ‘I believe, Lord, and I do confess, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who camest into the world to save

¹ Liturgy of Constantinople: by some attributed to the apostles; since the seventh century ascribed to St. Chrysostom.

sinner, of whom I am the chief. Make me partake of thy mystical supper; for I will not reveal the mystery to thy enemies, and I will not give thee a treacherous kiss like Judas; but, like the good thief, I confess, what thou art: remember me, O Lord, in thy kingdom.....' I regret that I cannot transcribe the whole of this confession, which concludes as follows: 'Pardon and remit me, O Lord, our God, the sins, which I have committed against thee, whether knowingly or through ignorance, whether by word or deed: O thou, who art goodness itself, forgive them all, through the intercession of thy unspotted and ever Virgin Mother: suffer me not to incur condemnation, but to receive thy precious and immaculate body.....' The priest then presents the chalice to the deacon, who says: 'I come to the immortal King: I believe, Lord, and I do confess, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:' and the priest says: Thou, O Deacon, N. the servant of God, receivest the holy body and precious blood of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins and eternal life.' The deacon going to communicate the people, says: 'Draw near *with faith and in the fear of God.*' The choir answers: *Amen, amen, amen*; blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord. The communion is administered to the faithful, by giving them, with a spoon, the consecrated bread and wine. The communicant says: 'I believe, O Lord, and confess, that thou art, in truth, the Son of the living God.' 'Servant of God,' says the deacon to him, 'receive the most holy body and precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.'

This liturgy is used by all the Greeks who are in the west, at Rome, in Calabria and Apulia; by the Mingrelians and Georgians; by the Bulgarians, Russians and Muscovites; by all the modern Melchite Christians, whether subject to the patriarch of Alexandria resident at Cairo, or to the patriarch of Jerusalem; or to the patriarch of Antioch, residing at Damascus.

We will now proceed to give some extracts from the liturgies of St. Mark,¹ of St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen. The

¹ Called also the Alexandrian and Coptic Liturgy. St. Mark was the first bishop of the Church of Alexandria.

Jacobite Copts, who were opposed to the council of Chalcedon in 451, have now continued to make use of it for more than twelve hundred years.

In the preparatory prayer, the priests says : ‘ O Lord, by virtue of thy holy Spirit, make us worthy to fulfil this ministry, that we may not fall into judgment before the throne of thy glory and that we may offer the *sacrifice* of benediction.....’ The following are a few words taken from the oblation : ‘ O Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son and Word of God the Father, bless this bread and this chalice which we have placed upon this sacerdotal table : sanctify them, consecrate them, and *change* them in such manner that this bread may *become* thy holy body, and that what is mixed in the chalice may *become* thy precious blood.’ Having devoutly repeated the words of institution, the priest continues : ‘ O Christ, our God, we thy sinful and unworthy servants, *adore* thee, and beseech thee, that through thy gracious clemency, thou mayest send down thy holy spirit upon these gifts, which are in thy presence, to sanctify and make these holy things, the Holy of holies : that he may *make* this bread the holy body of our very Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, which is given for the remission of sins and everlasting life to him, who receives it : (the people answer, *Amen*,) and this chalice, the precious blood of the New Testament of our ever Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is given for the remission of sins and life everlasting to him, who receives it.’ People, *Amen*. At the Preface before the breaking of the bread, the priest says : ‘ We, therefore, beseech him, the Almighty Lord God, our God, to make us worthy to communicate of his divine and immortal mysteries, the holy body and precious blood of his Christ.’ At the breaking of the bread, he says : ‘ O Lord our God, thou, who has sanctified the oblations, which lie upon the altar, by the descent of thy holy Spirit.’ A little before the communion, the deacon gives notice of it by these words..... ‘ With fear attend to God.’ The people reply : ‘ Lord have mercy on us.’ The priest then takes the larger particle of the host and having elevated it bows down and exclaims : ‘ Holy things are for the holy.’ And all

the people *cast themselves prostrate on their faces to the earth*. Shortly after this, comes the profession of faith, which the priest makes in the following terms: 'This is the holy body and the pure and precious blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This is, in truth, the body and blood of *Emanuel* our God—Amen. I believe, I believe, I believe and I confess to the last breath of life, that this is the life-giving body of thine only begotten Son, our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ. He received it from the Lady of us all, from the pure and holy Mary, mother of God, and made it one with his divinity without any commixtion, confusion, or alteration of the divinity. He witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate, and, of his own free will, delivered himself up for us all on the wood of the holy cross. I truly believe that this divinity was not separated from his humanity, no, not even for one single hour, or so much as the twinkling of an eye.¹ He delivered it for our salvation, for the remission of sins and everlasting life to him, who receives it. I believe this to be so in truth.'²

There is so much resemblance between the Ethiopian or Abyssian liturgies and the liturgy of the Jacobite Copts, that it will

¹ These words bear quite a catholic sense: they indicate the union but not the confusion of the two natures: they did not confound them, as did the Eutyechians. And, although the Jacobites attached to Dioscorus did indeed reject the council of Chalcedon by which he was condemned; they nevertheless pronounced anathema upon Nestorius and Eutyches, according to the edict of union of the Emperor Zeno, which they have always received.

² We are indebted for our information respecting the Jacobite Copts, to the travels and the laborious and luminous investigations of the learned Vansleb. He was a native of Erfurt, and studied the Ethiopian language under M. Ludoff, who prevailed upon the Duke of Saxony to send him to the Levant and as far as Ethiopia, with the expectation that he should there make some discoveries favorable to Lutheranism. Being unable to penetrate as far as Ethiopia, Vansleb turned his attention to the Jacobite liturgies, examined them thoroughly, by this examination discovered the errors of his communion, became a Catholic and afterwards a Dominican at Rome. Passing into France he was received and cherished by M. Colbert. This great minister, who only wanted men capable of seconding his vast and noble views, sent him again to the Levant, with orders to purchase all the oriental manuscripts he could discover. Vansleb sent more than five hundred of them to the Royal Library. After again attempting in vain to reach Ethiopia, he returned in 1676 to France, where he died a few years after.

suffice to cite a few particular passages from them. What is called the liturgy of the three hundred and eighteen fathers thus expresses the invocation : Wherefore O Lord, we beseech and intreat thee, mercifully to send down thy holy Spirit, and to cause it to descend, to come and shed its light upon this bread, that it may *become* the body of our Lord, and that what is contained in the chalice may be *changed* and may *become* the blood of Jesus Christ.¹

Another liturgy, translated into Latin by M. Ludoff, a Lutheran, has the following words : ‘ Send down; O Lord, we beseech thee, thy holy Spirit and his influence upon this bread and this chalice, to the end that he may *make* them the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, our Lord for ever and ever.’

The liturgy, called of the apostles,² after the words of our Saviour, goes on : ‘ The people say; *Amen, amen, amen*; we believe it, we are certain of it: we praise thee O Lord, our God. *It is truly thy body*, and so do we believe.’ And after the words over the chalice, the people say : *Amen, ‘ it is truly thy blood ; we believe it.’* We find here, before communion, the same strong and lively profession of faith that I extracted from the Coptic liturgy: we even find the expressions the same. The priest communicates the people saying : ‘ This is the bread of life, which comes down from heaven, *truly* the precious body of Emanuel, our God.’ The communicants answer; *Amen*. The deacon presents the chalice, saying : ‘ This is the chalice of life, which comes down from heaven, and is the precious blood of Jesus Christ.’ The communicants answer; *Amen, amen*.

Liturgies have been much more multiplied among the Syrians than among the other Christian Churches. The liturgy of St. James is regarded by them as the most ancient and the most common, as containing the whole order of the Mass, with which all the others agree. I have already cited some passages from the Greek version. I will now produce a few from the Syriac version. At the preparation for the sacrifice the deacon says : ‘ O

¹ Taken from Vansleb’s translation. *Histoire d’ Alexandrie* chapter on Transubstantiation. ² From Renaudot’s Latin translation.

God, who in thy mercy didst accept the sacrifice of the ancient just, accept also in thy mercy our sacrifice, and vouchsafe to grant our petitions.' Between the words of institution and the invocation, which are the same as in the Greek version, the deacon announces the descent of the holy Spirit upon the gifts, by a most striking admonition: 'How awful is this time my brethren,' exclaims he, 'how terrible is the moment, in which the vivifying and holy Spirit is about to descend from the highest heavens upon this Eucharist placed in the sanctuary, and to sanctify it. Hold yourselves *in fear and in trembling* and be fervent in prayer: may peace be with you and the security of God, the Father of us all. Let us cry three times, *Kyrie eleison.*' After this comes the invocation, as it is found in the Greek version. The deacon then makes a most beautiful prayer aloud: 'Bless us again and again, O Lord, by this holy oblation, by this *propitiatory sacrifice*, which is offered to God the Father, which is sanctified, completed and perfected by the descent of the holy and lifegiving Spirit..... Tremble, ye ministers of the Church; for you administer a living fire: the power that is given to you is above that of the seraphim. Happy the soul that approaches this altar with purity! for the Holy spirit registers its name in heaven and conducts it thither. Tremble, ye deacons, in the sacred hour when the Holy Spirit comes down to sanctify the body of those who receive him..... Be mindful, O Lord! of those who are absent, and have pity on us. Grant peace and repose to the souls of the faithful departed: pardon sinners in the day of judgment: place in repose and peace with the just and holy the souls of those who are departed from us by death: may thy cross be their support, thy baptism their clothing: may thy body and blood to their guide to conduct them to thy kingdom.....' The deacon, afterwards addressing himself to the people, says; '*Bow down your heads* before the God of mercies, before the altar of propitiation, and before the body and blood of our Saviour.' At the breaking of the host, at the communion of the priest, we find it invariably to be the body of Jesus Christ that is broken and watered with his blood; it is the holy and life-

giving blood that he receives. The deacon, administering it to the people, says: 'My brethren, the Church cries out to you; receive the body of the Son and drink his blood with firm belief:.....this is the chalice, which our Lord mixed on the wood of the cross: approach mortals, and drink it for the remission of your sins.

Now look at the invocation of the Syriac liturgy,¹ called, of St. Maruthas, metropolitan of Tagrit in Mesopotamia, and friend of St. Chrysostom: 'Have compassion on me, O God! the lover of man: send down upon me and upon this oblation thy holy Spirit, the Spirit which proceeds from thee, which receives of thy Son and perfects all the mysteries of the Church, which reposes upon these oblations and sanctifies them.' The people: 'Pray.' The priest: 'Hear Me, O God.' The people say thrice: '*Kyrie eleison.*' The priest, raising his voice: 'May he *transmute and make*, (*transmutet atque efficiat*) this simple bread into that very body which was immolated upon the cross; the very body that rose again with glory, and never knew corruption; the body that prepares life; the body of the very Word of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.' (The people: *Amen*,) and may he *transmute and make* the wine which is in the chalice *to become* (*transmutet et perficiat*) the very blood that was shed on the summit of Golgotha; the very blood which flowed upon the earth and purified it from sin; the very blood which prepares for life, the blood of the Lord himself, of the Word of God, and of the Saviour Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins and life eternal to those who receive it.

At the offertory the priest says:² 'May Christ, who was immolated for our salvation and who has commanded us to commemorate his death and resurrection, himself receive this *sacrifice* presented by our unworthy hands.' And, as he had asked the assembled people, they reply: 'May the Lord hear thy prayers, may thy *sacrifice* be acceptable in his eyes, and may he deign to receive thy *oblation* and honor thy priesthood.....

¹ From the latin translation of Renaudot. ² From the Liturgy used by the Nestorians, called the Liturgy of the Holy Apostles. Renaudot's latin translation.

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The Priest. May thy holy Spirit, O God! come and repose on the oblation of thy servants; may he bless and sanctify it.....' (The prayers for the consecration are wanting in the manuscript.) At the breaking of the host, and the mixture of the two species, the liturgy uses no other language than that of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the precious body and life-giving blood. At the communion the deacon cries out: 'Let us all approach *with trembling.*' And afterwards again: 'My brethren, receive the body of the Son. The Church exclaims to you; Drink his chalice with faith.' At the thanksgiving the priest says: 'Christ our God, our Lord, King and Saviour has made us worthy, by his grace, to receive his body and his precious blood, by which every thing is sanctified.'

'With hearts full of respect and fear, let us all approach the mystery of the precious body and blood of our Saviour;..... and now, O Lord! that thou hast called me to thy holy and pure altar to offer unto thee this *living and holy sacrifice*, make me worthy to receive this gift with purity and holiness.....' At the communion the priest says again: 'O Lord, my God! I am not worthy, neither is it becoming that I should partake of thy body and the blood of propitiation, or even so much as touch them. But may thy word sanctify my soul and heal my body.' And in the thanksgiving after communion, the priest says: 'Strengthen my hands which are stretched out to receive the Holy One..... Repair by a new life the bodies, which have just been feeding upon *thy living body*..... God has loaded us with blessings by his living Son, who for our salvation descended from the highest heavens, clothed himself with our flesh, has given us *his own flesh* and mixed *his venerable blood* with our blood, a mystery of propitiation.'¹

After the words of institution, the deacon says aloud: '*Silence and trembling!*' Then comes the invocation, which the priest, bowing down begins as follows: 'May the grace of the Holy Spirit come upon us and upon this oblation: may it descend and repose upon this bread and upon this chalice, and may

¹ In the liturgy of the Nestorians of Malabar.

it bless and sanctify them..... May this bread by the virtue of thy name, *become* the holy body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this chalice the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹

The invocation runs thus: 'O God! may the grace of the Holy Spirit come, dwell and repose upon this oblation, which we present before thee; may it sanctify *and make it*, i. e. this bread and chalice, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, thou thyself *transforming* them, *transmutante ea te*, and sanctifying them by the operation of the holy Spirit.'²

The liturgy of Nestorius and the preceding one of Theodorus resemble the first, called the liturgy of the apostles.

At the offertory of the mass for the dead are found these words:³ 'Holy Father, lover of mankind, receive this *sacrifice* in memory of the dead: place their souls among the saints in thy heavenly kingdom: may this *sacrifice* that we offer with faith, appease thy divinity and procure repose to their souls. At the canon, the priest speaking of our Saviour says: 'Taking the bread into his divine, immortal and spotless hands, which have the *power to create*, he blessed it, gave thanks, broke it, &c..... O God! send upon us and upon these gifts, thy holy Spirit, co-eternal and consubstantial with thyself (the deacon bows to the corner of the altar), that thou mayest *make* this blessed bread the body of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' And, holding the host over the chalice, he continues: 'That thou mayest *make* this blessed bread and wine the *true and real body* and the *true blood* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *changing* them by thy spirit.'..... The priest *adores* three times, kisses the altar; and from that time raises his hands no more over the gifts: but now, with his eyes fixed upon them,..... he *reveres them as God*, and with tears exposes his wants..... Towards the communion the priest *adores*, kisses the altar, and, taking the sacred body, dips it all into the precious blood, saying: 'O Lord, our God, make us worthy, we beseech thee to receive this sacrament

¹ Liturgy of Theodorus of Mopsuestia. From Renaudot's *latin translation*

² From the liturgy of Nestorius, Renaudot's *latin translation*. ³ Armenian liturgy: translated into latin by M. Pidon of St. Olon, bishop of Babylon, and into French by pere le Brun.

for the remission of our sins.'.... The priest, with humble reverence elevating the sacred body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ from the holy table, turns round and shews it to the people, saying: 'Let us with holiness taste this holy, sacred and precious body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, descending from the heavens, is distributed among us.'.... He then says: 'I confess and believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who didst take upon thee the sins of the world..... O Jesus Christ my God! I taste with faith thy holy and life-giving body for the remission of my sins..... O my God, Jesus Christ, I taste with firm faith thy purifying and sanctifying blood for the remission of my sins.' Then, making the sign of the Cross upon his mouth, he pronounces these words of St. Thomas the apostle: 'May thy incorruptible body be my life, and thy sacred blood the propitiation and remission of my sins.' Then, turning towards the people with the chalice: 'Approach with *fear* and with *faith*, and communicate in holiness.' During the communion of the people a canticle is sung, in which are these words: 'This bread is the body of Jesus Christ: this chalice is the blood of the new Testament: the hidden sacrament is made manifest, and by it God shews himself to us. *Here is Jesus Christ*; the word of God, he who sits at the right hand of the Father; he is *sacrificed* in the midst of us, &c.'

I cannot sufficiently exhort you, Sir, to read the whole of these different liturgies: you will find them in the admirable work of pere le Brun,¹ who has been my guide. I have followed him through his learned expositions, feeling convinced that I might safely rely on his authority. And now my only remaining wish is, that the few short extracts I have made from him, may create in you a laudable curiosity to read the whole of his work.²

¹ Explication litterale, historique et dogmatique des prieres et des ceremonies de la messe, suivant les anciens auteurs, et les monumens de toutes les Eglises du monde cretien. 4 vol: in 8mo. The English reader may profitably peruse the collection of liturgies to be found in an Appendix to that excellent work of the late Dr. Poynter, entitled, 'Christianity,' &c., Tr.

² The oriental liturgies were not much known in Europe before the seventeenth century. Had they been brought to light about a century sooner there is every

I know not what impression the above extracts may have made upon you. The impression they made upon me were such as I shall now candidly declare. In the first place, I became covered

reason to believe that they would have deadened the rage of the reformers against the apostolic dogmas of the Eucharist. Certain it is, that, since their discovery, they have brought back to the primitive faith and Catholic unity men of the first talents and of great learning, who had imbibed from their infancy the principles of the reformation. Certain it is, that, they have produced much trouble and disquietude in the heart of many more, who, notwithstanding, could not be torn from their error, but who were compelled to publish their anxious wish to see these liturgies again established in protestant communion. 'I find, says Grotius (*Votum pro pace*) in all the greek, latin, arabic, syriac and other liturgies, prayers to God that he would consecrate by his Holy Spirit the gifts offered to him, and that he would made them the body and blood of his Son. I had therefore good reason for saying that a custom so ancient and so universal, that it must be considered as coming from the first ages, ought not to be changed.

Whiston, Stephens and Grabe, distinguished divines of your Church, being dissatisfied with the English liturgy, have composed some of their own, more in conformity with the oriental liturgies. 'The reverend and pious Ed. Stephens (says Whiston in the preface of his liturgy) not only zealously declared himself to be of the same opinion, but had himself drawn up an excellent liturgy very conformable to the original liturgies..... And more than this, he made use of it most openly in London for many years, to his own great satisfaction as well as to that of his whole congregation. Even the learned and pious Dr. Grabe had so great a relish and admiration for the eucharistic formulary, that, not presuming to communicate in public, because the actual Anglican form differs in some respect from the primitive liturgies, he repaired to the private congregation of Dr. Stephens, and there communicated in the joy and consolation of his heart.' Now the liturgy of Dr. Stephens, after the words of institution ran thus: 'We offer thee through Jesus Christ this pure and spotless offering, in the most humble *adoration*..... In all humility we beseech thee, O Almighty God, to accept this *unbloody, reasonable* and spiritual sacrifice..... Send also thy Holy Spirit upon these elements here spread out, that he may bless and sanctify them: and that to those who receive them, this bread may become the precious body of thy Christ, and this wine, the precious blood of thy Christ, for the remission of sins and life everlasting.'

Dr. Grabe had composed two liturgies. One of them is in Greek, and in it are found these words: 'Hear us, O merciful Father! we humbly beseech thee; send down thy Holy Spirit on us, and these gifts here offered, and *make this bread* the precious body of thy Christ, and what is in the cup, the precious blood of thy Christ.' And at the communion: 'May the body of our Lord, Jesus Christ delivered for me (for thee), preserve my soul and body (thy &c.) to life everlasting! May the blood of Jesus Christ, shed for me (thee), preserve my soul and body to life everlasting!' This liturgy contained also a prayer for the dead.

In the English liturgy there was this prayer; 'Vouchsafe, O my God, to bless

with confusion : in them I read my own condemnation and also that of the great proportion of Catholics of the present day. How lively, said I to myself, is the faith of these first Christians, who lived near the times of revelation and its accompanying prodigies ! how feeling is their conviction of the truth and divinity of its dogmas ! how strongly do they express this their belief ! with what piety and holy fear do they approach to partake of the sacred mysteries. How do they labor to keep themselves in a fit state to approach ! and how eager are they to return again to the heavenly banquet ! They seem no longer to belong to the earth ; they lead the life of angels ; riches, honors, pleasures, all that can flatter the senses of man, they despise and forsake. Neither sufferings nor torments, nor death seem to affect them : their aim and object are eternity and heaven : good works, pure morals, prayer and a frequent use of the sacraments are the means they employ to arrive thither. And we, degenerate offspring of so holy a race, how do we behave ? Tepid and slothful inheritors of their name and belief, we scarcely possess a shadow of their virtues. The time and thoughts of the generality of Christians are occupied with the pleasures and affairs of this world. Incredulity in some, stupidity of faith in others, indifference in almost all, have nearly exterminated practical Christianity from among us. Observe their repugnance to the sacred table : by many it is entirely abandoned ; many, whether from habit or for appearance sake, approach to it once in the year ; tepidity and thoughtless indifference accompany and sanctify, by thy word and thy Spirit, these thy creatures, this bread and wine, that they may *become* for us the body and blood of thy very dear Son.

Whiston's liturgy, printed at London, 1713, holds the same language. (See Pfaffius *Sancti Irenæi scripta anecdotæ*, p. 346.) In 1716, many English and Scotch entered into a compact to unite themselves to the oriental Church, and establish a particular rite. Two years afterwards, they printed at London, 1718, a liturgy in English, in which are these words : ' We give thee thanks for admitting us here to offer thee the *sacrifice*..... Send down thy Holy Spirit, the witness of the passion of our Saviour Jesus, on this *sacrifice*, that He may make this bread the body of thy Christ.' All this is, indeed, so much homage paid to the apostolicity of our public liturgy : but of what avail were all these feeble attempts ? It is neither by clubs and associations, nor by peace-meal, that the deserted path of truth is regained.

their approach ; nay, shameful to say ! but too often appear in those who officiate at the altar. For, where do we find the minister seized with fear and trembling ? To judge from the precipitation of some, and the cold formality of others, it will be difficult to believe that they even think of their exalted ministry, of the divine victim they are about to offer for the salvation of the people, and of that divine furnace which they hold in their hands, and which is about to pass to their heart, without enkindling a flame therein ? Unfortunate people ! and more unfortunate pastors ! whence comes this universal degradation ? I know full well the cause, and in spite of the pretensions of the age, I shall not hesitate to lay it to our profound ignorance. We appreciate only the knowledge of the things that pass, and view with apathy those things that never pass away. Our judgment, taste, inclination, and our whole life are one system of positive error, reaching with fatal consistency from the cradle to the grave. *O curvæ in terras animæ et celestium inanes !* what will be the termination of this irreligious disorder ; and to what this abuse of our reason will conduct us, I know not : but, it is impossible not to remember that according to the word of God the extinction of all faith is one indication of the approaching close of this terrestrial world.

Having thus lamented our fallen state, I turned my thoughts upon the various protestant societies, and comparing their belief with the belief of the first ages, I was seized with astonishment and pity. Is it possible, have I a thousand times exclaimed, that men should announce to the world a religious reformation with the plausible and alluring promise of restoring the primitive faith and fervor, whilst at the same time, they commence the work, by erasing from the catalogue of faith that which the primitive ages believed and practised as most holy and sublime ! for, most assuredly, the liturgies written in the fifth century present us with those essential prayers, which the bishops and priests of preceding ages repeated from memory at the altar. Some trifling variations in the expressions, in the arrangement of the prayers, and in the disposition of the rites and ceremonies,

clearly shew that they were not written by the apostles : but the complete and universal agreement of the liturgies pointing out to us, through the whole Christian world, the oblation, the victim, the unbloody sacrifice, the invocation for effecting the change of substance, the adoration which follows it together with the real presence, &c. can proceed but from one and the same cause, a cause equally imperative and obligatory upon all, in short, from one and the same apostolical institution. Indeed, if the apostles had not taught by their word and example that these dogmas should be expressed in the celebration of the sacred mysteries, how comes it that they are found in all the liturgies as soon as they appear ? Let the advocates of a figurative presence and of a real absence tell us, if they can, at what time and in what manner mankind could have passed from a belief so simple as theirs, and which, according to them, had been taught by the apostles and their disciples in all nations, to a perfectly contrary belief, to inconceivable dogmas, which had been hitherto unheard of, and which suddenly plunged the world into a new abominable idolatry. By what means and at what precise time could this prodigious change take place ? Would it be at the time when the liturgies were committed to writing ? or would it be before that time ? But they were not written all at once : there was no general order given for bringing them to light ; there was not, neither could there have been, any agreement or understanding amongst those who compiled them. A thousand clamors would have been raised against the unfaithful authors of a first liturgy ; a thousand reclamations would have echoed from every side against interpolations so serious and notorious. If we call to mind the zeal of St. Cyprian against those who did not mix water in the chalice, we shall be able to judge of the reclamations that would have been raised against more essential innovations at a time when, as St. Jerome said, the blood of Jesus Christ was still smoking, and the newly enkindled faith was burning in the hearts of the faithful. It would have been the duty of every bishop and priest loudly to condemn an attempt of such a nature ; silence, in such circumstances, would have been a crime. Every

patriarch and metropolitan would have published the ancient liturgy of his Church to stifle these revolting novelties in their birth; and we should have possessed at this day a multitude of contrary liturgies. It cannot be doubted that the Fathers of Ephesus and Chalcedon would have proclaimed the legitimate tradition, have suppressed the authority of the false liturgies, and confirmed those that were authentic and true.

We shall be obliged therefore to suppose that the change must have taken place before the publication of the liturgies. But, name what Church you please, it is impossible to conceive that such a change could have been effected during the interval between the time of the apostles and the commitment of the liturgies to writing. We will, if you please, take an example the Church of Alexandria. About the year 328, we find Frumentius leaving that city and carrying with him a copy of the liturgy for the purpose of celebrating it in the centre of Abyssinia. This copy, transcribed by the order and under the inspection of Athanasius, must have been revised by him and found conformable to that which was in use in his Church, to that which numerous venerable priests of his clergy had constantly recited at the altar for fifty or sixty years, and which they had learned from their predecessors the most advanced in years; already we find that the very first links of this chain bring us to the times of St. Clement, who died in this Church about the year 215, and St. Clement assures us that in his time there were still surviving some of those, who had immediately succeeded the apostles. Where are we to place this anti-apostolical change in a chain so closely and sacredly connected, and so near to the first origin of Christianity? The same observation would apply to the Church of Jerusalem, of which the second bishop, Simeon, was 120 years old when crowned with martyrdom, and the liturgy of which was explained by St. Cyril to his neophytes about the middle of the fourth age; and likewise to the Church of Lyons, where St. Irenæus, the disciple of St. Polycarp, sealed the faith with his blood in 204, &c. Now if a change of this nature could not have been effected in any given Church, how

are we to conceive it possible in them all? How are we to imagine, that, in times so pure and so devoted to the doctrine of the apostles, men could ever have come to an understanding to change and to corrupt that doctrine; that they could, for the adopting of an unheard of faith and novel practices, have concerted together, in Italy, in Gaul and in Spain, in Syria and in the kingdoms of Asia? But this is not all: how are we to imagine that the Nestorians, who appeared at the precise time when the liturgies were first published, would have borrowed them from the Church which condemned their heresy, instead of retaliating upon her by reclamations which they might reasonably have made, and which their interests would not have allowed them to forego? How are we to conceive again, that the partisans of Eutyches would have followed the same conduct, and that the numerous enemies of the council of Chalcedon—the Jacobites, Copts or Syrians—would have taken pride in celebrating the catholic liturgies, notwithstanding so many essential and manifest interpolations? This supposition is full of every thing so contrary to the laws that rule the heart of man, that it would be loss of time to dwell any longer on the subject. As it cannot with any shew of reason be contradicted, nothing remains but frankly and honorably to acknowledge, that the unanimity, and uniform agreement of all the Christians of the fifth age, without even a trace of the most trifling reclamation, clearly prove that the liturgies of that period must faithfully express the belief and practice of the first ages.¹

These ancient liturgies you have just been reading—in them you have every where discovered the altar, the oblation, the im-

¹ I add, to what hath been already observed the consent of all the Christian Churches in the world, however distant from each other, in the prayer of *oblation* of the Christians *sacrifice*; in the holy Eucharist or sacrament of the Lord's Supper; which consent is indeed wonderful. All the ancient witnesses agree in this form of prayer, almost in the same words, but fully and exactly in the same sense, order and method; which, whosoever attentively considers, must be convinced, that this order of prayer was delivered to the several Churches in the very first plantation and settlement of them.' Bishop Bull's 'Some important Points of Primitive Christianity maintained and defended.' London, 1714, 2nd Edit. Vol. II. Sermon. xiii. p. 553.

molation of the victim and the unbloody sacrifice: every where have you found the invocation for affecting the change of substance, which, on the one hand, supposes the real presence, and, on the other, commands our adoration. From north to south, from east to west you have heard words expressing these dogmas proceed from the mouth of the priests and bishops, even, if I mistake not, with more energy and spirit in the oriental Churches than in the Roman Church. You have beheld all the Christians of the world approaching the altar with faith, fear and adoration. Such therefore was incontestably the belief of the world, united with the general and almost daily practice of this golden age of Christianity. The liturgies¹ of every thing that bore the Christian name to the 5th century and of every thing that still bears it, excepting only yourselves, trace them in characters so bold and legible that I cannot conceive how any man of sense, who is solicitous for his salvation, after having once read them, should not immediately abandon every communion, in which these dogmas are rejected, that he might unite himself to the faith of the primitive Church, become associated to her sacred liturgy, and join with her in adoring Jesus Christ present under the sacred species in the august and adorable mystery of the Eucharist.

¹ There is not one of these ancient liturgies which, together with the *oblation* and *sacrifice*, does not also mark out, and often in the same phrase, the *change of substance* and the *adoration*. Bishop Bull must have been aware of this: yet he passes it over in silence. From the uniformity of the liturgies, he infers with good reason the apostolic doctrine of the oblation and sacrifice: but he refrains from drawing the same inference respecting the change of substance and the adoration! He loudly proclaims the apostolicity of the former, while he conceals that of the latter! What ties his tongue and checks his manly progress towards truth! Deplorable weakness of human nature! The acknowledgment of the whole truth would have exposed him to sacrifices, which he had not the courage to make.

A P P E N D I X.

Particular Belief of the Principal Churches respecting the Apostolicity Churches of their Liturgies.

It will be but just and proper to commence by the eminent and primitive Church, in which all the others unite as in their centre. See, then, in what manner the Sovereign Pontiffs have spoken of their Liturgy: 'Who does not know that what has been left to the Church of Rome by Peter, and is practised to the present day, ought to be observed by all: that no one can add to it, or introduce any thing into it without authority, or from any other source: it being manifest above all things that, throughout all Italy, in Gaul, Spain, Africa and Sicily, no Church has ever been established, but by those, to whom the venerable apostle Peter or his successors had confided the priestly administration of it?'

Gelasius, who occupied the holy see from 492 to 496, has left us a sacramentary bearing his name, which is the most ancient of any that have come to us in the Roman Liturgy. He has arranged the prayers handed down to him by tradition, and has also introduced some prayers and prefaces of his own. Following the opinion of the learned, we must consider the sacramentary of Gelasius as a collection of what was read at mass in the Church of Rome from the time of the Apostles, and of some few additional prayers, which this saint thought advisable to introduce.

From Rome the Churches of Spain received the Liturgy, as we learn from Innocent I. just quoted, and also according to the tradition among the Spaniards, of which Isidore, the celebrated and learned bishop of Seville, assures us in the following most positive terms: 'The order of the mass, together with the prayers by which the gifts offered to God are consecrated, was first instituted by St. Peter.'† We may add, that he did it at the instigation of St. Paul; for St. Clement, successor of St. Peter, says in his letters to the Corinthians, that the apostle, after having instructed the East, announced the Gospel to the extremities of the West, which will apply to Spain. We know, further, from St. Paul himself, that he projected this apostolic course. 'When I shall begin to take my journey into Spain,' wrote he to the Romans, ‡ 'I hope that as I shall pass, I

* Innocent I. to Decentius, an. 416. † On the Church office, B. I. ch. xv. an. 601. ‡ Ch. xv. v. 24 and 28.

shall see you,' And a little afterwards: 'I will come by you into Spain.' It appears also that after this voyage St. Peter and St. Paul sent from Rome seven bishops into Spain, who extended the faith in that vast idolatrous country, and there also sealed it with their blood, after having founded many Churches as established the public worship and divine service according to the liturgy of St. Peter.*

Pope Vigilius † sent the order of the Roman mass to Profatanus, bishop of Brague, that he might see how it was drawn up. The council of Brague in 563 adopted it for all Spain. Now, in the letter of Pope Vigilius, the canon is called by excellence the *canonical prayer*: we there learn that it comes down traditionally from the apostles, *quem ex traditione apostolica suscepimus*; that it was straight forward in every mass and that there were not different canons for different feasts, *sed semper eodem tenore oblata Deo munera consecramus*: that there were merely some additions made on certain solemn festivals by way of commemorating them. This testimony confirms what has been already mentioned, that, according to the Roman tradition, the canon, that is, the essential part of the liturgy, came from the apostles.

The liturgy, that Pepin and Charlemagne caused to be put aside for the Roman rite, was undoubtedly brought from the East into Gaul. We come to this decision from its close resemblance to the oriental liturgies. It appears that St. Paul, on his way from Rome to Spain, passed through Gaul and left bishops there, Crescentius at Vienne, Paul at Narbonne, Trophimus in Arles. Pothinus, first bishop of Lyons, where he suffered martyrdom when upwards of ninety, was a disciple of St. Polycarp: Irenæus, his successor, came also from Smyrna, where he had been brought up by the same apostolic man. The letter of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons to those of Asia and Phrygia clearly shews the relation existing between Christian Gaul and the East. This should suffice to shew the origin of the Gallic liturgy and its apostolical institution, because it was indubitably practised and taught by its first bishops. It is indeed probable that the apostles of Gaul went to Rome, and there received authority from St. Peter or his successors. But this sanction of the Holy See did not prevent them from forming the liturgy according to the usage of the Eastern Churches, to which the Church of Rome made no resistance, since their liturgies differed in nothing essential from her own. We know that when St. Polycarp was at Rome, Pope Anicetus allowed him the honor of celebrating the sacred mysteries in his Church.

Hilduin, abbe of St. Denis, in his preface on the Areopagitics, addressed to Louis le Debonnaire shortly after the death of Charlemagne in 814, speaks of some missals of the highest antiquity, and 'almost consumed with age, which contained the order of the mass according to the Gallican rite, such as was received with the faith of this western country, and always used, until the Roman rite, now in use, was adopted.' They were, therefore, persuaded that the Gallic liturgy was as ancient as the faith, and that both were derived from the same source—the apostles and apostolic men.

The Greek and Syriac liturgy of Jerusalem is incontestably traced to St. James, first bishop of that first Church, where the apostles celebrated the mysteries to-

* Letter of Pope Gregory VII. to the kings Sancho and Alphonsus. † Vigilius, elected pope in 538.

gether before their dispersion, and where St. James continued to celebrate them during the remainder of his episcopacy. The fathers of the general council in Trullo, in 692, cited it as coming certainly from the same apostle, and made use of it to refute the error of the Armenians, who at that time merely put wine in the chalice without water. It will be readily perceived how it may indifferently be called the liturgy of St. James or of Jerusalem. The Greeks and the Syrians of that town and the neighboring countries have always regarded it as transmitted by St. James. They wrote it at first in Greek for their use, because that language was generally spoken in the great towns of the East in the fourth and fifth centuries, at which periods the liturgies began to be committed to writing. In the Greek it bears the name of St. James, as well as in the Syriac version afterwards made from it.

Firmilian, when at Jerusalem towards the commencement of the third century, observed some difference between the office there celebrated and the Roman office. He observes * to St. Cyprian that the ceremonies at Jerusalem are exactly the same as those at Rome. He merely takes notice of the difference in the ceremonies; which supposes that in essentials he discovered no difference whatever.

In the judgment of skilful critics, the liturgy which St. Cyril of Jerusalem explained to the newly baptized is exactly the same as that known under the name of St. James. We see nevertheless that since the apostles' time and even since the time of St. Cyril, it has undergone some change in the ceremonies and in the collects or prayers, some being lengthened and others shortened: a change very common to books in common use, and which circumstances failed not to occasion, even after they had been committed to writing. It is also very manifest, that, not having been, like the other liturgies, written till the fifth century, there was added to the name of Jesus Christ the word *consubstantial*, and to that of the Blessed Virgin the title of Mother of God, defined at Ephesus. This proves, indeed, that it was not written before these general councils, since it was not cited by them as a proof; but it would hardly be the part of a judicious critic to conclude from this circumstance, that it did not exist before these additions, which were commanded by posterior decrees of the Church.

For more than eleven centuries has the Church of Constantinople made use of two liturgies, one under the name of St. John Chrysostom, the other under that of St. Basil. Neither one nor other of these two bishops was the author of these liturgies. The eloquent patriarch did not receive the glorious title of Chrysostom, till three centuries after his death. Before him, in his time, and long afterwards, the liturgy, which has since gone by his name, bore the name of the apostles. For the purpose of distinguishing it from so many others equally coming from the apostles, and to follow the custom which had been introduced in other parts, they gave it without doubt the name of this great patriarch. At the conclusion of the sixth century it had not as yet received his name. Our voucher for this is Leontius, a lawyer of Byzantium, who reproaches Nestorius in the following strain: 'Another crime yet, which yields in no respect to the preceding one: he had the audacity, without regard to the liturgy of the apostles and to that of St. Basil, written in the same spirit, to model a new form of mass different from that

* Epist. LXXV.

which our fathers had transmitted to the Churches. In this his new mass he covered the mysteries of the Eucharist with blasphemies rather than with prayers.*

As to St. Basil, we know from St. Gregory Nazianzen, that he had composed prayers for the altar: and St. Basil himself, in his letter to the clergy of Neocesarea, speaks of those which he had made for the mass: he had intended them for his monastery: they accorded with those which were said in the Churches, merely with the addition of certain prayers to the canon without changing or removing any part of it: they were much admired in the East: various Churches accommodated them to the order of their liturgies, each after its own manner.

The Church of Alexandria was founded by St. Mark; we cannot doubt that this evangelist gave to his Church the order of the liturgy, which was followed by his successors and by the bishops under their jurisdiction. Cyril, who lived till 444, was occupier of the patriarchal see about the time when the liturgies were committed to writing, that is, about the council of Ephesus, in 431. It was at first written in Greek, which was spoken in Alexandria, in Coptic for the provinces, then, in the seventh age in Arabic, after the conquest of Egypt by Mahomet. Cyril had, after the example of many saints, composed prayers for the altar: † the splendor he had thrown upon the Church caused his name to be put to the liturgy which was written, but this did not destroy the remembrance of its first apostolical origin. The ancient coptic authors declare that the liturgy of St. Mark was augmented by Cyril, *liturgia Marci quam perfecit Cyrillus*.

Frumentius and one of his cousins, both very young, were led into Ethiopia by a merchant of their parents, who had also entrusted to him the education of their children. The barbarians having massacred the merchant and his crew, found the two children studying under a tree, and preparing their lessons: they were moved with compassion and led them to the king, who, charmed with their appearance and compassionating their situation, kindly took them into his protection, and eventually made Frumentius his treasurer and secretary of state, and the other his cup-bearer. The king dying some years afterwards, Frumentius divided the affairs of the regency with the queen dowager, during the minority of her son. He employed his credit and influence in favor of the Christian merchants who landed on those coasts. Obtaining, at last, from the young king permission to return with his relation to Tyre, his native country, he passed through Alexandria, ‡ of which Athanasius had just been elected the patriarch, made known to him the state of the Christians in Ethiopia, and the happy dispositions manifested by the barbarians towards Christianity, and besought him to send them a bishop. Athanasius, after duly considering the matter, decided upon sending them Frumentius himself. From being a laic, he was accordingly made bishop of all that country, where his preaching was crowned with wonderful success. ||

Who can doubt that, upon dismissing him for a distant country, Athanasius would provide him with what was necessary for the ministry and public worship, such as a copy of the Scriptures and of the liturgy, to supply the defect of his memory, till then unpractised in the administration of the sacraments, and that

* Leontius against Nestorius and Eutyches. † *Cat. de liturg. orient.* t. I. 171. Renaudot. t. I. p. 94. ‡ In 326. || Rufinus, *Hist.*

after his death, leaving it to his Church, his successor might find it written at length? What very much strengthens this more than probable conjecture is, that M. de Ludolf has by his translation made us acquainted with an Ethiopian liturgy, in which there is mention made of 318 fathers of Nice only, to whom Athanasius was so much devoted.

Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, condemned and deposed in the general council of Ephesus in 431, for teaching that there were two persons in *Christ, and consequently denying the union of the Word with the human nature, and the divine maternity of the B. Virgin, found many adherents in Syria, where these notions had long been in embryo, since Paul of Samosata. The Nestorians carried their errors with Christianity into the kingdoms of the Assyrians and Persians, from thence into the Indies, and even in the seventh age, as far as China, as has been discovered from an inscription found in 1625 in the town of Sigam-Fu, capital of the province of Xinsi, which inscription has been considered as authentic by the most learned antiquaries. It was engraved on a stone of twenty-nine columns, in Chinese characters with some Syriac lines, and dated the year of the era of the Greeks or Sileucida, 1092, which corresponds with the year 780 or 781 of our era. From it we learn that the Gospel was preached in China by priests who came from Syria in the year 936. You may consult on this singularly curious monument father Kircher, in his *China Illustrata*, and the liturgies of Pere Lebrun, t. iii. p. 374.

Now, the Nestorians have three liturgies, written in the Syriac language, the first entitled of the apostles, the second of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the third of the Nestorians. The learned abbe Renaudot who has translated them, observes that the first is the ancient liturgy of the Churches of Syria before Nestorius: the second was to be the liturgy of the Church of Mopsuestia, in Cilicia, of which Theodore, the friend and master of Nestorius, was bishop: the third was to be the liturgy of Constantinople, which Nestorius had followed in it, but into which he insinuated his errors. The analogy and conformity of the words of institution between the liturgy of Constantinople and that of the Nestorians sufficiently proves that they were originally the same. We do not discover the error of the Nestorians in the two former.

According to the tradition of Lesser Armenia, the faith was announced to their ancestors by SS. Thadæus and Bartholomew. We know that at the commencement of the third century there was found there a great number of Christians: the attachment of the Armenians to their religion determined the emperor Maximinus, who renewed the persecution in 235, to declare war upon them, although they were friendly to the Romans. In the following persecutions of Decius and Diocletian they had many martyrs.

Greater Armenia was converted at the commencement of the fourth age by St. Gregory the Illuminator, himself an Armenian, educated at Cæsarea and ordained bishop by Leontius, who assisted at the council of Nice, and was succeeded in his see by St. Basil. 'Shall the Church no longer exist in the two Armenias, because you are not there?' said Optatus of Milevum to the Donatists. And Rufinus, the translator of Eusebius, after relating what we have said of Maximinus, adds in a parenthesis, that *all Armenia is entirely devoted to religion*. St. Basil continued, after the example of his predecessor, to extend his solicitude to

these countries, and to send them bishops. St. Chrysostom was sent thither into exile, and there finished his holy and glorious career.

It was therefore from Cæsarea that Greater Armenia received its liturgies, and also the beautiful prayers which St. Basil had composed. It added some prayers of St. Athanasius, and of St. Chrysostom, whose memory it held in honor. It wrote its liturgy like the other Churches, about the middle of the fifth age, and followed it in its primitive purity till the middle of the sixth: but then it permitted itself to be led into schism and hatred against the council of Chalcedon rather than into the error of Eutyches, by James the Syrian, bishop of Edessa.* The Armenians inserted in their liturgy the Eutychean addition, *who was crucified*, &c., to the *trisagion* or *thrice holy*; as Nicephorus relates. This reproach, and that of not mixing water in the chalice, are the only ones ever made by the Church to their liturgy, which incontestably had its origin before the schism, and must have been brought to them by their apostle Gregory.

*Photius' Letter to the Patriarch of the Armenians.

LETTER X.

A recapitulation upon the Eucharist.

WE have seen that the secrecy so religiously observed throughout the whole Church on the subject of the Eucharist during the first ages, could have been intended to conceal neither more nor less than the real presence. We have seen that, in the celebration of the sacred mysteries, the bishops and priests of these same ages, recited set forms of invocation and prayers, in which we find the clearest and most energetic terms employed to express the real presence, the change of the substance, the adoration, and the oblation of the victim, or the unbloody sacrifice of the new law: And after this what necessity can there be of entering upon a more minute and particular examination as to what these same bishops and fathers may have written in the works they have left behind them? You will easily conceive that they could never have taught a doctrine directly opposed to that which they were guarding with so much circumspection; and that, while day by day they continued, in the public liturgy, to call down the Holy Spirit, to effect the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, they could not, in common consistency, have maintained in their writings, that no change whatever of substance was effected in the bread and wine. It is hardly to be supposed that in their temples and religious assemblies, they should have presented to the adoration of the faithful and themselves have adored the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and, at the same time, should have advanced in their writings that divine worship could not be paid to the consecrated elements, without idolatry, seeing that these creatures were but the figure and the memorial of Jesus Christ, absent and in heaven. Equally objectionable would be the supposition that they should in their writings have pronounced the new law to be without a sacrifice, while they themselves were daily

offering a sacrifice to God upon their altars. Produce the most obstinate and inveterate Zuinglian and let me but once persuade him that the discipline of secrecy had undoubtedly the dogma of the real presence for its cause and object, or let him be compelled to admit that the change of the substance, the adoration, the unbloody sacrifice, proclaimed in all the liturgies of the fifth century, are necessarily of apostolic origin, and I will defy him to do otherwise than conclude, that, whatever the fathers have said upon the Eucharist, must absolutely be referred unto it. And now, Sir, I flatter myself, you clearly perceive, that the occult discipline relative to the Eucharist was actually indebted to the doctrine of the real presence, and to nothing else, for its existence; I also flatter myself that you will no longer entertain a shadow of doubt as to the apostolic origin of these dogmas, uniformly expressed in all the liturgies written in the fifth century. You ought, therefore, to feel well convinced, without further enquiry, that the passages of the fathers upon the Eucharist, can neither be understood nor explained in a sense contrary to the doctrine they were secretly preserving, a doctrine they so strongly expressed in the private celebration of their liturgies. Not, however, that I would deter you from examining these passages. It shall be my pleasure now, immediately, to assist you in so doing. For, in a matter of such moment, there cannot be too great an accumulation of proofs.

From the occult discipline we learn that the mysteries of religion were studiously veiled in obscure and enigmatical expressions, whenever there was danger of their dignity being compromised before the non-initiated; and that, on the contrary, when no such danger existed, they were discussed without disguise. From it also, we are taught, that the same precaution and reservedness that attended the bishops in their public instructions, never left them in their writings. "How should it be proper," says St. Basil, "to divulge abroad to the public at large in writing, what is not lawful to expose to the eye of the uninitiated?"

Now, to mark out the precise circumstances in which there

did or did not exist danger of the mysteries being compromised in instructions or writings, would, at this distance of time, be a venturesome undertaking. The fathers alone were able to judge of the freedom with which they could safely communicate their sentiments, and they alone could calculate the probable danger resulting therefrom. We, for instance, should never have supposed that any risk could be run in writing to a bishop; and yet we find that Innocent I. at the commencement of the fifth century, dares not speak openly of the mysteries to Decentius. It might never have entered our thoughts, that a Christian of the second age could have opened himself with confidence to a Pagan Emperor: and yet Justin made no difficulty in admitting Antoninus into many secrets of the sanctuary.

We know, however, to a certainty, that the fathers, in their discourses before the catechumens and unbelievers and in composing the works destined for the public eye, were obliged to be upon their guard and to proceed with wariness and reserve, as they themselves very frequently testify; because, in a general way, they found themselves in these embarrassing circumstances. We know, also, to a certainty, that they must have developed this doctrine in its entire and naked form, when speaking or writing for the instruction of the newly-baptized. For, on these occasions, their object was to initiate them thoroughly in the mysteries of which they were to be partakers; and it became necessary to explain the nature of the sacrament and give every other essential information respecting it, that their ignorance might not expose them to profanation or sacrilege.¹ Whence

¹ "On the eve of the great paschal solemnity, and of our regeneration," says Cyril of Jerusalem, * "we shall give you the necessary and suitable instruction; with what reverence and in what order you must enter the baptistery; what are the reasons for the sacred ceremonies there made use of; with what devotion you must, on coming forth from baptism, approach the altar of God, and participate in the spiritual and celestial mysteries there offered: in order that, having your souls enlightened by our instructions and exhortations, you may each of you comprehend the greatness of the gifts conferred upon you by the Almighty."

"Of all the things," says St. Gaudentius, † "that are pointed out to us in the

* Catech. 18. † Explanation of Exodus to the Neophytes.

it follows, that if we would form a correct judgment of the opinion held by the fathers upon the Eucharist, we must investigate writings of the second kind, and not those of the first. Good sense requires that, for the discovery of the real sentiments of an author, recourse should be had to the writings in which he must have clearly expressed them, and not to those in which he was under the necessity of concealing them in vagueness, obscurity, and ambiguity of language.

There is no doubt that, in those glorious ages, every bishop was most zealous in instructing the neophytes of his Church, and that between the baptismal font and the sacred table, he detained them for some time, for the purpose of disclosing to them what had hitherto been concealed; and instructing them in the sublime theology of the sacrament, they were about to have the happiness of receiving. There is no doubt that, if some of these holy prelates trusted on these occasions to the ideas suggested at the moment by their piety and learning, still many must have preferred committing their thoughts to writing, that their instructions might be more connected, methodical and clear, for the assistance also of their memory, and to spare themselves the time and trouble of two annual preparations for the work, during their episcopacy. Not that such instructions, replete with the mysterious doctrine, were written for the purpose of be-

book of Exodus, in describing the celebration of the pasch, we shall at present speak only of those, which cannot be explained before the catechumens, *but which notwithstanding it is necessary* to disclose to the newly baptised..... This splendid night (of Easter) requires our instruction to be adapted rather to the circumstances of the time, than to the lesson of the day, in order that the neophytes may, *for the first time*, be taught in what manner we partake of the paschal sacrifice.....*.

“You not only see the same body that was seen by the magi,” says St. Chrysostom; † “but you are acquainted with its virtue, you know how it communicates itself, and you are ignorant of nothing that it has effected, *having been carefully instructed in all these particulars at the time of your initiation.*”

“In the paschal solemnity,” says St. Augustine, ‡ “the first seven or eight days are appointed for the instruction of the children (the newly-baptised) upon the sacraments.”

* Treatise v. † Hom. XXV. on the I. Ed. to Corinth. ‡ Discourses 233 delivered on the fifth day of the paschal solemnity.

coming public. The case was far otherwise, most assuredly. You may conceive with what vigilant anxiety the prelate must have guarded his invaluable treasure from the eye of the suspected or the stranger, and with what difficulty even his friends could extort a communication of his labor, or a copy of the essay from his wary and fearful circumspection.¹ One single elementary and dogmatical instruction of this nature would bring us more acquainted with the primitive belief respecting the Eucharist, than would a thousand mutilated passages, extracted from the writings that were made public by the fathers, and in which, of course, an apprehension of revealing the mysteries drove them to a studied reserve and obscurity of style.

If it be true, as there is every reason to suppose, that the generality of the bishops, during the four first ages, actually composed detailed instructions upon the dogmas of the Eucharist, we can only regret that the far greater number of these are lost. It has pleased providence, however, that some of these authentic and incontestable records of primitive faith should be transmitted to us. In them we must interrogate antiquity, whose voice may still be heard, and by whom we ourselves may be instructed in the discourses addressed to the neophytes, and which, of their nature plainly decide the matter for or against, between us and the protestants. Whatever was the belief at that time, whether protestant or Catholic, must there be found clearly delivered. For it was necessary to inform the neophytes what they were going to receive; whether it was really the body and blood of Jesus Christ, or merely a little bread and wine, as a figure and representation, and nothing more: whether the substance of the body took the place of the substance of the bread, and consequently required the adoration of the faithful; or, whether the bread and wine, still preserving their own nature, became simply a memorial of Jesus Christ absent, and called, of course, for no other respect, or reverence than what might be due to any other reli-

¹ I would here recommend the re-perusal of the observations prefixed by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, to his *Catechetical Instructions*. I have quoted it in the appendix on the *Discipline of Secrecy*.

gious ceremony. Again, one or other of the two contradictory tenets must be expressed in positive terms, in these dogmatical and elementary instructions. Your own theologians, no less than ourselves, have them in their hands; but, I suspect, you will never have found them much inclined to bring you acquainted with such documents. Ask them to communicate these documents to you, together with their sentiments respecting them. You will soon find that they take your request with no very good grace: and in truth, to deal plainly with you, it is impossible that they should. Well! Sir, I will spare them their embarrassment: and so far as you are concerned, I will go on to accomplish their defective ministrations. Now, therefore, imagine yourself among the ancient neophytes of Jerusalem; and that you, as well as they, are about to be addressed by the venerable patriarch Cyril,¹ on the sacrament you have hitherto known little about, in language and instructions as follows: “The doctrine of blessed Paul is alone sufficient to give certain proofs of the truth of the divine mysteries.” He quotes the passage from St. Paul to the Corinthians, and thus proceeds: “As then, Jesus Christ, speaking of the bread, declared and said, this is my body, who shall ever dare to call his word in question? And as, speaking of the wine, he positively assured us and said, this is my blood, who shall doubt it and say, that it is not his blood? Once, in Cana of Galilee, he changed water into wine by his will alone; and shall we think it less worthy of credit, that he changed wine into his blood? Invited to an earthly marriage, he wrought this miracle; and shall we hesitate to confess that he has given to his children his body to eat, and his blood to drink. Wherefore, with all confidence, let us take the body and blood of Christ. For under the type or figure of bread, his body is given to them, and under the figure of wine, his blood is given, that so being made partakers of the body and blood of Christ, you may become one body and one blood with him..... Wherefore I conjure you, my brethern, not to

¹ Ann. 350. Catech. myst. IV. n. 1, 2, 3, pp. 292, 293, 294. passim. ed. Oxonii. 1703.

consider them any more as common bread and wine, since they are the body and blood of Jesus Christ, according to his words : and although your sense might suggest that to you, let faith confirm you. Judge not of the thing by your taste, but by faith assure yourself, without the least doubt, that you are honored with the body and blood of Christ. This knowing, and of this being assured, that what appears to you bread, is not bread, but the body of Christ, although the taste judges it to be bread ; and that the wine which you see, and which has the taste of wine, is not wine, but the blood of Christ."

St. Gregory of Nazianzum,¹ addressing the faithful and neophytes, says: "*Waver not in spirit*, when you hear speak of the blood, passion, and death of God ; but rather eat the body and drink the blood *without any hesitation*, if you would live. *Never doubt* of what you hear said respecting his flesh, and be not scandalized at his passion : be firm and constant, and in no wise shaken by the language of our adversaries."

St. Gregory, of Nyssa,² speaking of the newly-baptised, says : "Man being composed of two parts, the body and the soul, united and mixed up together, it necessarily follows that those who are to be saved communicate in each of these parts with him who conducts to life, that is, with Jesus Christ. Thus the soul, becoming united to him by faith, arrives at salvation by that way ; for what is united to life participates no doubt of life. But the body also must find another life by commingling itself with him who is to save it. For as they, who would counteract the effect of poison in their body, must have recourse to an antidote that may diffuse its healing virtue through every part of the body to which the poison had penetrated ; so, in like manner, after taking the fatal poison of sin, which is destructive of our nature, it becomes indispensably necessary for us to employ a remedy that may restore what is decayed and disordered, and on operating as a powerful antidote within us, may dispel, by its contrary quality, the malignant effects of the poison we had re-

¹ Born 327 ; died 389. Second Discourse on the pasch. ² An 369. Orat. Catech. c. XXXVII. T. II. p. 534, &c., Ed. Paris, 1615.

ceived. But what is this medicine? That body which was shewn to be more powerful than death, and was the beginning of our life; and which could not otherwise enter our bodies than by eating and drinking..... The body of Christ, by the inhabitation of the word of God, was transmuted into a divine dignity; and so I now believe, *that the bread, sanctified by the word of God, is transmuted into the body of Christ.*" One might suppose, that St. Gregory of Nyssa, had in his eye, and was refuting before hand, the sacramentarians who were afterwards to tell the world, that the body of Christ was to be eaten by faith alone. This great bishop teaches, in opposition to them, that as man is composed of two substances, so he is in two different ways united to God; the one adapted to the nature of the soul by faith: the other conformable to the nature of his body, by the real manducation of the body of Christ made present in the Eucharist by a change of substance.

I now request your attention to the discourse delivered by St. Ambrose¹ to his neophytes: "I entreat you, who are soon to become partakers of the sacred mysteries, seriously to consider, which is the most excellent, the nourishment given by God to the Israelites in the desert, and called the bread of angels, or the flesh of Jesus Christ, which is the *very body* of him who is life itself, the manna which fell from heaven, or that which is above the heavens..... Water flowed from out of a rock in favor of the Jews, but for you, *it is blood that flows from Christ himself*..... Thus this meat and drink of the old law, were but figures and shadows: but here we speak of the truth and the validity. And if the shadow so much excited your admiration, how truly noble must be the substance. For light is preferable to the shadow: truth to the figure: the body of Christ to the manna of heaven. But you may say, I see somewhat else; how do you assert that I shall receive the body of Christ?—this remains to be proved. How many examples may we not make use of to shew, that we have not here what nature formed, but what

¹ *Des Initiandis*, c. IX. T. IV. p. 350, 351. Paris, 1614.

the divine blessing has consecrated, and that the virtue of this blessing is more powerful than that of nature: because by it nature itself is *changed*? Moses held the rod: he cast it on the ground: and it became a serpent—again he took it by the tail, and again it became a rod..... If now the blessing of men was powerful enough to *change nature*, what must we not say of the divine consecration, when the very words of our Lord operate! For the sacrament which you receive, is accomplished by the word of Christ. Now if the word of Elias could call down fire from heaven, shall not the word of Christ be able to change the nature of created things?

“You have read concerning the creation of the world: *He spoke, and it was done: he commanded and it was formed*. If, then, the word of Christ could draw out of nothing what till then had no existence, shall it not be able to *change* the things that exist, *into what they were not before*? For it is not a less effect of power, to give new existence to things, than to *change* the nature of things, that previously existed. We will now establish the truth of this mystery, from the example itself of the incarnation. Was the order of nature followed, when Jesus was born of a virgin? Plainly, not. Then why is that order to be looked for here: It was the true flesh of Christ, which was crucified, which was buried: and this is truly the sacrament of his flesh. Our Lord himself proclaims: *This is my body*. Before the benediction given by the celestial words, it is called bread; but after the consecration the body of Christ is signified. He said also; *This is my blood*. Before consecration, it has another name, and after consecration it is denominated blood. And you answer *Amen*; that is, *it is true*. What the mouth speaks, let the internal sense confess: what the words intimate, let the affection feel. By these sacraments Christ feeds his Church, and by them is the soul strengthened. It is a mystery you should carefully keep to yourselves, lest you communicate it to the unworthy and publish the secret before unbelievers, by an unrestrained freedom of speech. You must guard your faith with the utmost vigilance, that you may preserve the purity of your

life and the secret of the mystery with inviolable fidelity." To argue on the foregoing words would weaken their force. I shall merely observe; 1. that St. Ambrose not only makes a clear exposition of the doctrine of transubstantiation, but proves it moreover, by adducing the very proof and examples that have been produced in its defence since it became a contested point: 2. that the Eucharist is several times called a sacrament, which circumstance will be found of service later: 3. that the neophytes, when instructed in the mysteries, were cautioned to preserve the most profound secrecy respecting them.

St. Ambrose, or rather the very ancient author of a work upon the sacraments, which was for a long time attributed to that archbishop, after repeating the above cited passage nearly in so many words has the following additional observations in another book: "As our Saviour is the true Son of God, not merely by grace, like men, but by nature, being of the self-same substance with the Father; so, according to his own words, it is his *true and real flesh* that we eat, and his *true and real blood* that we drink. But you may here propose the objection stated by many of his disciples, when he spoke to them of eating his flesh and drinking his blood: how can it be his true and real flesh and blood, seeing, as I do, the resemblance, but not the truth and reality of blood. I have already instructed you above of the power inherent in the word of Christ to *change* and transform the works of nature. Moreover, when any of his disciples could not endure his words, but went away from him on hearing him talk of giving them his flesh to eat and his blood to drink, St. Peter remained firm, and said in the silence of all,—Thou hast the words of eternal life; to whom else should we go? Thus, to prevent similar objections being made by others, on the ground of a natural horror to human blood, it has pleased the Almighty to favor you with a sacrament which, while it bears the resemblance, supplies you also with the grace and virtue of his true and real nature. I am the living bread, says he, which came down from heaven. Now his flesh did not come down from heaven, since it was derived from the blessed virgin upon earth. In what man-

ner then, did this celestial and living bread come down from heaven? By the union of the divinity and humanity effected by Jesus Christ in his person. You, therefore, who *receive his flesh*, participate of his divine substance in that sacred repast." That the manducation here treated of is not one made by faith is most evident. It is that kind of manducation which excites the doubt; how can it be his true and real flesh, since I do not see it? Now it would be absurd to suppose, that the circumstances of the flesh not being seen would ever raise a doubt in any one's mind about its spiritual reception by faith, since contrariwise, for such reception by faith, it is indispensably necessary that the flesh be not seen.

St. Gaudentius of Bréscia¹ spoke in the same strain to the newly baptized, as you will hear. Describing the celebration of the pasch, he says: "Of all the things pointed out in the book of Éxodus, we shall at present treat of those only, which cannot be explained before the catechumens, but which nevertheless it is necessary to disclose and explain to the newly baptized."² In the shadows and figures of the ancient pasch, not one lamb, but many were slain, for each house had its sacrifice; because one victim could not suffice for all the people, and also because this mystery was a mere figure and not the reality of the passion of the Lord. For the figure of a thing is not the reality, but only the image and representation of the thing signified. But now that the figure has ceased, the one that died for all, immolated in the mystery of bread and wine, gives life *through all the Churches*, and being consecrated, sanctifies those who consecrate. *This is the flesh of the lamb, this is his blood*: for the living bread that came down from heaven said: The bread, which I will give you, is my flesh, for the life of the

¹ An. 306, Treatise II. *on the nature of the sacraments*.

² Here is an additional and direct proof that the famous secret, kept by the Christians as well from the catechumens as from the unbelievers, positively concealed the mysteries revealed to the newly-baptized, viz: the real presence and the change of substance in the Eucharist, as St. Cyril, the two Gregories and St. Ambrose have clearly explained it to them, and as we shall now see St. Gaudentius also explaining it.

world. His blood is rightly expressed by the *species* of wine, because when he says in the Gospel, I am the true vine, he sufficiently declares that the wine, which is offered in the figure of his passion, *is his blood*.....He who is the Creator and Lord of all things, and who produces bread from the earth, *of the bread makes his own proper body*, (for he is able, and he promised to do it;) and he who *changed water into wine, now changes wine into his blood*.

“The portion of scripture we have read, closing its subject with an excellent and mysterious conclusion, says: For it is the pasch of the Lord. O the depth of the riches, of the knowledge and wisdom of God! It is the pasch, he says, that is the passover or passage of the Lord, to the end that you may not think that to be earthly which has been made heavenly by him *who himself passes into it by making it his body and blood*. For what we have said above in general terms touching the manner of eating the flesh of the pascal lamb, we must particularly observe in the manner of receiving the same mysteries of the passion of our Lord. Therefore you ought not to reject them, considering them, like the Jews, to be crude flesh and blood, and with the Jews exclaiming: How can he give us his flesh to eat? Neither ought you to represent this sacrament to your minds as any thing common or earthly, but rather *believe with a firm faith*, that, by the fire of the Holy Spirit, this sacrament is *in effect become* what the Lord assures you it is. For what you receive is the body of him, who is the *living and heavenly bread*, and the blood of him, who is the sacred vine. And we know that, when he presented to his disciples the consecrated bread and wine, he said: This is my body, this is my blood. Let us therefore believe him, whose faith we profess: *for truth cannot lie*..... As then it was ordained in the old law to eat the head of the paschal lamb and also the feet, we must now, in the new law, eat both the head of Jesus Christ, which is his divinity, and the feet, which is his humanity, united and concealed as they are in the sacred and divine mysteries: believing every thing that has been transmitted to us by the *tradition of the Church*, and being

careful not to break this solid and firm bone, that is, the truth delivered from his own mouth, This is my body, and this is my blood.

“And now, if there remains any thing, which you do not understand in this explanation, let it be consumed by the ardor of your faith. For our God is a consuming fire, purifying and enlightening our minds for the understanding of divine things, that, discovering the mysterious causes of this same celestial sacrifice instituted by Christ, we may render him eternal thanks for so great *and ineffable* a gift. For it is the true inheritance of his New Testament, which he left us on the very night of his passion; as the pledge of his presence. It is the viaticum with which we are fed and fortified in the pilgrimage of this life, until we arrive at heaven, and the full and unveiled enjoyment of him, who when on earth, proclaimed to us: Unless you eat my flesh, and drink my blood, you shall not have life in you. It is his will that we should perpetually be favored with his graces and blessings, and that his blood should continually sanctify our souls by the representation of his passion. Therefore did he command his disciples, whom he had established the first pastors of his Church, *to celebrate without ceasing these mysteries* of eternal life, until Jesus Christ should come down again from heaven; to the end that the pastors and the rest of the faithful having always before their eyes the representation of the passion of Christ, and even receiving it in their mouth and stomach, the remembrance of our redemption should never be effaced from our memory, and that we might always have at hand an easy remedy and sure preservative against the poison of the devil. Do you therefore, as well as we, receive, with all the holy avidity of your hearts, this sacrifice of the pasch of the Saviour of mankind, that we may be thoroughly sanctified in soul and body by our Lord Jesus Christ, *whom we believe to be personally present in these his sacred mysteries.*” Were it not for fear of spinning out this dissertation to a needless length, I should feel much pleasure in remarking upon the passages that chiefly strike me in this discourse. We here perceive that ancient simplicity which invites;

and a solidity of doctrine that supports and fortifies faith. We must not fail at least to observe that the holy bishop professedly derives from the tradition of the Churches all the the instructions he gives to the newly-baptised, and that he moreover testifies that the apostles, pursuant to the command of their master, were accustomed to celebrate the liturgy at all times and in all places. Observe also that after establishing the real presence and transubstantiation in the clearest and most unequivocal terms, he still gives to the Eucharist the appellations of *sacrament and pledge of the presence of the mystery of bread and wine*, and goes so far as to say that the blood is well represented under the species of wine. You see then that these different forms of expression are perfectly consistent with the Catholic doctrine: and I entreat you to carry this in your mind to the conclusion of this subject.

St. Chrysostom frequently observes the relationship that exists between the Eucharist and the Jewish pasch, and teaches that the blood of the paschal lamb is the emblem of the blood of Christ, that the figure belonged to the Old Testament, the reality to the New.

Listen to his instructions on this subject to the newly-baptised: "The statues of princes have often served as an asylum to men who had fled to them for refuge, not because they were made of brass, but because they were the images of the princes. In like manner, the lamb saved the Israelites, not because it was blood, but because it prefigured the blood of our Saviour, and announced his coming. Now therefore, were the enemy to discover, not the blood of the figurative lamb printed on our door-posts, but *the blood of the truth and reality resplendent in the mouth of the faithful*, he would keep at a still greater distance from us. For if the angel passed by at the sight of the figure, how much more will the enemy be scared at the appearance of the reality?..... Consider with what kind of aliment he feeds and nourishes us. *He himself* is the substance of the aliment; *he himself* is our food. For as a tender mother, impelled by the feelings of nature, is anxious to feed her offspring,

with all the milk she can supply: so Jesus Christ feeds, with his own blood, those whom he regenerates.”¹

“Let us believe God is every thing, and not gainsay him,² although what is said may seem contrary to our reason and our sight. Let his words prevail and be preferred before the testimony of our eyes. Thus let us do in mysteries, not looking only on the things that lie before us, but holding fast his words; for his word cannot deceive; but our sense is very easily deceived. That never failed; this often. Since then, his word says; *This is my body*; let us assent, and believe, and view it with the eyes of our understanding: Christ left us nothing sensible, but spiritual and intellectual objects, under *sensible forms*..... for if you were incorporeal, he would have bequeathed to you gifts purely incorporeal; but as your soul is united to a body, those gifts are to be comprehended under *sensible and corporeal signs*. How many persons are heard to say; I would wish to behold his figure, his shape, his attire! But you see him, you touch him, you receive him into your breast. You would, however, wish to see his garments. He gives himself to you, not only to be looked on, but to be touched also, to be eaten, to be admitted into your breast. If you cannot reflect, without indignation, upon the treason of Judas and the ingratitude of those who crucified the Lord, see that you do not render yourselves guilty of the profanation of his body and blood. Those unfortunate men inflicted death on the sacred body of Christ, and you, after so many benefits received, usher him into an impure and defiled soul! for not content with becoming man and being ignominiously treated, he has chosen moreover to become united with you, so that you form but one body with him, and this, not only by faith, but actually and in reality.

“How pure and holy ought he to be who is made partaker of so sublime a sacrifice! How much purer then the rays of the

¹ Hom. to the Neophytes. The same sentiments are found in nearly the same words, on the Hom. of St. Jehn, and in the LX. to the people of Antioch. ² Hom. LX. to the people of Antioch, repeated in great measure in Hom. LXXXIII. on St. Matthew.

sun should be the hand that distributes this flesh, the mouth that is filled with this spiritual flame, the tongue that is purpled with this adorable blood! Reflect, to what an honor you are raised, to what a table you are admitted! He, whom the angels tremble to behold, and at the contemplation of whose majesty they are struck with awful terror. He feeds us with his own substance; with him we are intimately united, so as to become one body and one flesh with him. Who shall tell the wonders of the Lord? Who shall duly celebrate his praise? What pastor ever fed his sheep with the members of his own body! But why do I mention pastors? Even mothers sometimes permit their infants to be suckled by strange nurses. But he will not allow his own to be thus treated. He himself nourishes them with his own blood, and gives himself entirely to them.....

“Jesus Christ, who formerly produced these astonishing effects at his last supper with his disciples, is the same who produces them now. We act as his officers and ministers: but it is he who sanctifies the offerings and *changes them into his body and blood*..... This discourse I address not only to you, who participate of them, but also to you who are the dispensers of them.¹ And you, laics, when you approach the sacred body, believe that you receive it from the invisible hand of Christ: for he who has done more, that is, has laid himself upon the altar, will not disdain to present you his body.” The illustrious prelate proceeds afterwards to treat of the duty of charity, which he greatly extols as the best disposition for the mysteries: and alluding to the Lord’s Supper he adds: “The table at which he eat was not of silver, nor was the chalice from which he poured out blood to his apostles, of gold, and yet how precious and awful was this vessel, by reason of the spirit with which it was replenished!.....

Although we possess not any of the first instructions that St. Augustine must have given to his neophytes on their leaving the

¹ These words sufficiently indicate that there were none but ecclesiastics and the faithful present: this is still better proved by the clearness with which the doctrines are propounded and explained, in every point of view. On this account I have made no hesitation in annexing this homily to the dogmatical instructions delivered for the neophytes.

baptismal font and previous to their participating of the Eucharist, although the discourses of his that are extant turn, generally, upon the paschal solemnity or the congruence of the bread and wine with the mystical body of our Lord, or on the moral dispositions that should accompany us and render us worthy of approaching daily to the sacred table, we still may occasionally find the doctrine and belief of the Church briefly yet clearly touched upon. "I am mindful," says he to his baptised adults, "of my promise made to you. I engaged to deliver to you, who have been baptised, an explanation of the sacrament of the Lord's table, which you at present behold, *and of which you were, last night, partakers.* You should know what you have received, what you do receive, and what you ought receive every day. The bread that you behold on the altar, *being consecrated by the word of God is the body of Jesus Christ*; this chalice, or rather that which is in the chalice, being sanctified by the word of God, *is the blood of Christ.*"¹ Such is the compendium of the instruction that had already been given to the newly-baptised the evening before, previous to their admission to the sacred table, for which reason the holy bishop merely makes reference to it without dwelling further upon it, and passes on to the particular subject of his discourse, which is to know why the body and blood are given under the form of bread and wine. "This," says he, "is explained by the apostle: We being many are but one body, one bread. He admirably develops the thought of the apostles, shewing that the mystical body, of which we are all members, is represented by the numerous grains of corn that compose the same bread and the different grapes that compose the same wine: hence, he concludes that this was the reason why Christ made choice of the matter of bread and wine to form of them his body and blood.

This instruction is precisely the same in substance and nearly the same in words as is found in another discourse, which St. Fulgentius has preserved, and which was delivered in the same circumstances: "Yesterday eve you beheld the same that you behold at present. But you have not as yet been informed

¹ Sermon LXXXIII.

what they were. what they signified, and how great and excellent were those things of which they were the sacrament. What you see, then, is bread, this your eyes declare it to be: but according to the testimony that faith must give concerning it, *the bread is the body of Christ, and the wine of this chalice is the blood of Christ.*"¹ Here is the doctrine in its abridged form; and because it had been fully detailed by him the evening before. St. Augustine proceeds to another subject that he had not as yet treated, to the explanation of the mysterious congruence and conformity of the matter of the sacrament with the mystical body of Jesus Christ.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hitherto had not permitted himself to be known by the two disciples, was pleased that they should know him in the breaking of bread. The faithful understand what I say: they know Christ in the breaking of bread. For it is not all bread, but that which receives the benediction of Christ, that *becomes the body of Christ.*"²

"Tell me, my brethren,³ on what occasion was it that our Lord was pleased to make himself known? It was when he broke bread with two of his disciples at Emmäus. We then may rest assured: we break bread and we recognise our Lord. He determined to be known in this action alone, for our sakes, who were not to behold him in his mortal flesh, and yet were to eat his flesh"⁴

¹ Discourse to the newly-baptised. ² Sermon CCXXXIV. for Easter day, to the un-baptised and the people. ³ Sermon CLX. on the pasch, to the same.

⁴ Reason itself and the discipline of the Church convince us that no bishop could dispense with himself from complying with the duty of instructing the newly-baptised before their admission to the sacred table. It cannot there ore be doubted that St. Augustine composed discourses similar to those of SS. Cyril, Ambrose, Gaudentius, &c., for the purpose of instructing his regenerated children in the mystery of the Eucharist, previous to their participation thereof. He has left us none of his purely elementary and dogmatic instructions. We have many of his discourses addressed to the neophytes and the people. We have his sermons for Easter-Sunday and the days of the octave. All these go upon the supposition that they had communicated the evening before, and had consequently been initiated in the doctrine concealed from them while catechumens, but necessarily revealed and explained to them before communion, that they might *know the greatness of the presents there made to them by God*: and that they might not fall into that criminal ignorance, of which those are guilty, says Hesychius. w. l.) partake of the body of Christ, *without knowing that it is really the body of Christ.*

“Receive,” says St. Augustine again, “receive in the bread what was fastened to the cross; receive in the chalice what issued from the side of Jesus Christ. For he will receive death and not life, who shall believe that life is capable of a falsehood.”¹

“Doubt not,” says St. Cyril of Alexandria, “of this truth, since Christ so manifestly assures us that it is his body, but rather receive with faith the words of our Saviour; for, being the truth, he cannot speak what is untrue.”²

The same patriarch teaches again that “he, who was eaten figuratively in Egypt, voluntarily immolates himself in this supper; and that, after having eaten the figure, because it was for him to accomplish the legal figures, he produced the reality, by giving himself to be the food of life.”³

“The mystery, we speak of, is awful and astonishing. There, the lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, is immolated. There, is the Father rejoiced, and the Son voluntarily immolated, not now by his enemies, but by himself, that man may understand that the torments he has endured for his salvation have all been voluntary.”⁴

You probably did not expect to find such clear, express and decisive evidence. All this is, however, well known, and our apologists have often cited it to protestant theologians. And shall it always be produced without effect? Shall it always be *our* fate to be perpetually producing the most convincing proofs, and *yours* to be as perpetually refusing them your assent? I have, notwithstanding, the courage to hope, that in this new point of view in which they have been presented, they will leave a deeper impression upon your mind. The more you reflect upon the doctrine of the Fathers, the more will you perceive an almost irresistible force impelling you towards Catholicity. Allow me to put it to your candor, whether it is not most clear and evident, that, if the Fathers had trained the neophytes and the faithful in the principles of Luther and Zuinglius, they would

¹ Another discourse to the newly-baptised, cited by B. Alger, about the year 1120. ² Passage cited by Victor of Antioch, Elias of Crete, and according with a manuscript of the Elector of Bavaria. ³ Discourse on the mystical supper.

⁴ The same.

never had dreamed of assuring them, that, in the Eucharist, what is bread before the consecration becomes after the consecration the true and real body of Christ. Now St. Justin positively testifies,¹ "That the bread and wine, having become the Eucharist by the prayer of the word of God, are the flesh and blood of the same incarnate Christ." St. Gregory of Nyssa² declares "that the bread is but bread at the first, but that no sooner is it consecrated by the mystical prayer, than it is called and *actually is* the body of Jesus Christ." St. Ambrose³ inculcates the same doctrine in the following terms: "Our Lord himself proclaims; This is my body. Before the benediction of the celestial words; the bread is named: after the consecration, the body of Christ is signified. He himself calls it his blood. Before consecration it has another name: after consecration it is denominated blood. And you answer, *Amen*, that is, *it is true*. What the mouth speaks, let the mind inwardly confess and assent to." And the author of the book of the sacraments, says after him, "You will perhaps say, it is nothing but common bread. It is indeed bread before the words of the sacrament; but after the consecration, from being bread, it becomes the flesh of Christ."

Do you not see most clearly that, according to the notions of persons professing the protestant religion, it never would have entered into the minds of the Fathers to establish a change of substance in the Eucharistic bread and wine, or to prove this change to the neophytes and the faithful? Yet the Fathers frequently and urgently press the belief of the change of substance upon them and support the doctrine by proofs. We find even in Origin the following passage:⁴ "We eat the bread that is offered which by prayer is made a holy body; by which, they, who partake of it with a pure spirit, are rendered more holy." St. Cyril of Jerusalem⁵ speaks still more clearly and pointedly. "Jesus Christ, in Cana of Galilee, once *changed* water into wine by his will only, and shall we think it less worthy of credit, that he changed wine into blood?" St. Gregory of Nyssa.⁶ "By

¹ Apology I. ² Discourse on the baptism of Christ. ³ To the newly-baptised.

⁴ Against Celsus. ⁵ Catech. IV. ⁶ Orat. Catech. c. XXXVII.

virtue of the benediction the nature of *visible things* is *changed* in his body..... And so I now believe that the bread, sanctified by the word of God, is *transformed and changed* into the body of Christ." St. Ambrose¹ teaches us "that by the benediction nature itself is *changed* (he proves it by a reference to the double change wrought by Moses in the rod) and that, if the blessing of a man be powerful enough to *change* nature, much more may be said of the divine consecration, when the words of our Lord operate: that, if the word of Elias could call down fire from heaven, the word of Christ must be still more capable of *changing* the nature of the elements, and of *changing* things that are into that which they were not." And again:² "By the mystery of the sacred prayer, the sacramental bread and wine are *changed* into body and blood." St. Gaudentius;³ "The Creator and Lord, who produces bread from the earth, of the bread makes his own proper body, (because he is able and he promised to do it): and as of water he made wine, so of wine he makes his blood." St. Chrysostom:⁴ "The things that are proposed are not the effects of human power; but he who effected them at his last supper, effects them still at the present time; we only act as his ministers; he who consecrates and *changes* them is Christ himself." St. Cyril of Alexandria,⁵ exclaims against those who *denied the* POSSIBILITY of the change. "If thou persistest in asking *how*, I, in my turn, will ask thee how the rod of Moses was *changed* into a serpent; how the waters were *changed* into blood..... Hesyhius:⁶ "The sanctification of the mystic sacrifice, the *change* and *transformation* of sensible into spiritual things, must be attributed to him, who is the true priest." "It is this invisible priest (says St. Cesarius of Arles)⁷ who, by the secret virtue of his divine word, *changes* visible creatures into the substance of his body and blood..... As then, by a simple word, God, in an instant, formed out of nothing the height of the heavens, the depth of the sea, and the wide ex-

¹ To the newly-baptised. ² Book IV. *On faith*. ³ To the neophytes. ⁴ Hom. LXXXIII. on St. Matthew. ⁵ *Dogmatical instructions on St. John*, B. IV. ⁶ Comment, on *Leviticus*. ⁷ Hom. on the pasch.

tension of the earth, so, likewise, in the spiritual sacraments, by a power equally great, the virtue of his word is instantly followed by the effect." Eusebius of Emessa, or the author of the homilies which for a thousand years have gone under his name: "The invisible sacrifice converts by a word, pregnant with a secret power, visible creatures into the substance of his body and blood..... And what is there wonderful in his being able to *change* by his word the things which he was able to create by his word? On the contrary, one would imagine it to be less wonderful for him to change into something more excellent, that which he had created out of nothing."

Do you not here again perceive that, according to the figurative sense of Zuinglius, the Fathers would have had nothing wonderful to present in the Eucharist to the admiration of the faithful and the neophytes? And yet attend to the words of the holy and learned deacon Ephrem: ¹ "The illustrious patriarch, Abraham, presented terrestrial food to angels descended from heaven, and they eat it. Doubtless it was most miraculous to see incorporeal spirits eating meats on earth. But that, which the Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, has done for us, baffles language, and surpasses imagination: since, notwithstanding our fleshly composition, he feeds us with spirit and fire, giving us his body to eat and his blood to drink."

St. Ambrose: ² "And now, if the mere benediction of a man (Moses) was powerful enough to *change nature*, what must we not say of the divine consecration, when the very words of our Lord operate?..... You have read concerning the creation of the world: He spoke, and it was made; he commanded and it was formed. If then the word of Christ could draw out of nothing what till then had no existence, shall it not be able to *change* the things that exist, into what they were not before? Why look you for the order of nature in the production of the body of Jesus Christ in this sacrament, seeing that the order of nature is equally disregarded in the same Lord being born of a virgin?"

¹ Against curiosity in searching into the divine nature. ² Discourse to those who were to be initiated.

St. Chrysostom upon the words: *How can he give us his flesh to eat.*¹ “When a person asks how a thing can be done, he begins to doubt whether it can be done..... If you inquisitively search into this wonderful work, why do you not also ask, after the miracle of the five loaves: How did he effect so prodigious a multiplication?..... But you will say the thing spoke for itself, it was plain to the eye. And I tell you that for that very reason they should have believed it to be as easy for him to perform this last miracle. For he first multiplied the loaves, that the Jews might no longer remain incredulous as to what he had afterwards to announce to them.....” And elsewhere:² “The words that I have spoken are spirit and life, that is, are divine and spiritual, have *nothing carnal about them*, depend not on the ordinary laws of nature.” And again in another homily:³ “He, that was present at the last supper, is the same that is now present and consecrates our feast: for it is not man who makes the things lying on the altar *become* the body and blood of Christ; but that Christ who was crucified for us. The words indeed are pronounced by the priest, but it is the power and grace of God that consecrates them. He said, *This is my body*: these words make the change. And as the words of God, *increase and multiply and replenish the whole earth*, though spoken but once at the creation of the world, still produce their effect, by imparting to human nature the power and virtue of generating children through the course of ages: in like manner, although the adorable words of Christ, *This is my body*, were but once uttered, they have not failed to secure to this sacrifice all their virtue and efficacy to the present day on the *altars* of the Church, and will not fail to secure the same until the last coming of our Lord.” I could fill twenty pages with quotations from this great archbishop, and from many others; Hesy chius, Cesarius, Eusebius of Emessa, for example. But what have just been produced should be sufficient. For assuredly, neither Zuinglius, nor any of his fol-

¹ Homily XLV. on St. John. ² Homily XLVI. on St. John. ³ On the treason of Judas.

lowers will ever be able to enlarge upon such mysteries and wonderful operations in the Eucharist of their conception.

Again, Sir, you must here candidly acknowledge that, had the belief and persuasion of the primitive fathers been exactly that of the sacramentarians, who in later ages have informed us that the bread and wine remain exactly the same before and after the consecration, the faithful and neophytes could have had no difficulty in conceiving and no hesitation in believing such a doctrine, neither would the Fathers have had to labor in removing doubts and difficulties from their minds. And yet we find St. Gregory Nazianzen¹ telling them: "Approach with firm faith to eat the body and drink the blood of Christ, and *entertain not the remotest doubt* respecting them." St. Hilary:² "Let us hold to what is written. Jesus Christ leaves no room to *doubt* of the reality of his flesh and blood, since the declaration of our Lord and of our faith asserts it to be his flesh indeed and his blood indeed." St. Cyril of Jerusalem:³ "With all confidence, let us receive the body and blood of Christ, for under the appearance of bread, his body is given to us; and under the appearance of wine, his blood is given. For, as Christ, speaking of the bread, declared and said, this is my body, who shall dare to *doubt it?*" St. Ephrem:⁴ "Participate in the immaculate body and blood of the Lord, with a firm faith, resting assured that you receive the lamb whole and entire." St. Ambrose⁵ and the author of the book on the sacraments: "The Lord assures us that we receive his body and blood; ought we to doubt the truth of his words, or the correctness of his testimony? You will perhaps object: how can it be his true and real flesh, if the bread bears no appearance of real flesh? How can it be his blood, since I behold indeed the resemblance, but in no wise the reality of blood? I have already told you that the word of Christ can *change the ordinary nature of things.*" Reflect but for a moment on this doubt: and you will feel that it infallibly proves the real

¹ Orat. XLII. T. I. p. 690. Ed. Colonisæ, 1690. ² B. VIII. on the Trinity.

³ Catech. IV. *mystery.* ⁴ Against curiosity in searching into the divine nature.

⁵ To the neophytes, B. IV. *of the Sacraments.*

presence as taught by St. Ambrose. Such a doubt, in fact, is most natural, when the body is asserted to be present, although the flesh appears not to human sight. But it is extravagant, if the body be supposed absent in heaven; for in that case, there would be no need for the flesh to appear, but on the contrary, it should not appear at all, since it is not there at all.

Had they believed and taught at that time, what all protestants have since pretended, that the bread and wine remained after consecration the same as they were before, neither the faithful would have had any reason to mistrust their senses, nor the fathers to admonish them to disregard their testimony. And yet we find that St. Cyril of Jerusalem says to his neophytes:¹ “Do not consider them as common bread and wine, for they are the body and blood of Jesus Christ, according to his words; and although your *senses* might suggest that to you, let faith confirm you. Judge not of the thing by your *taste*, but by faith assure yourself, without the least doubt, that you are honored with the body and blood of Christ. This knowing, and of this being assured, that what appears to you bread, is not bread, but the body of Christ, although the *taste judges* it to be bread, and that the wine, which you see and which *has the taste of wine*, is not wine, but the blood of Christ.” St. Chrysostom:² “Let us believe God in every thing, and not gainsay him, although what is said may seem *contrary to our reason and our sight*. *Let his word overpower both*. Thus let us do in mysteries: not looking only on the things that lie before us, but holding fast his words: for his word cannot deceive; but our senses are very easily deceived. The former never failed the latter often. Since then his word says: This is my body; let us assent, and believe, and view it with an intellectual eye.” Hesychius:³ “The spirit of God which is in us, and the word that he has left us, regulate the use of our senses, and prevent not only our sense of taste, but the senses also of hearing, seeing, touching, and smelling, from an undue interference in mysteries, so that they lead us not to any

¹ *Catech.* IV *mystery*. ² Hom. LXXXIII. on St. Matthew. ³ *Comment, on Leviticus*.

low ideas, or weak and presumptuous reasonings, unworthy the grandeur and sublimity of the mysteries. We must attribute the sanctification of the mystic sacrifice, and the *change* or *transformation* of the sensible into spiritual things, to him, who is the true priest, Jesus Christ, that is, we must consider him as the sole worker of this *miracle*, because the power of the word, which he has pronounced, sanctify these visible things to such a degree that they are raised far beyond the reach of our *senses*." And St. Cesarius:¹ "We must judge by faith, and not by our *senses*, of this undivided and perfect victim, which cannot be seen by corporeal and outward eyes, but only by those that are interior and spiritual. Of this our Lord speaks, when, with divine authority, he pronounces that his flesh is meat indeed and his blood drink indeed. Wherefore we must give no place to incredulous doubts in our minds, seeing that the author of this heavenly gift himself testifies to its truth and reality."

Had the primitive ages believed and taught what is now generally believed in your Church and what has always been taught among the Calvinists, that the bread and wine are the signs and figures of the body and blood, the memorial of Christ present in heaven, but absent from earth, how happens it that the Fathers say nothing of the kind on those occasions, when they were able, nay, even bound to give a clear exposition of the doctrine? I allude to the instructions given to the newly-baptized before their admission to the Eucharist. You have seen these instructions. All of them, that are extant, have, to the best of my knowledge, been laid before you. Here is not a word said about figures or signs to represent the absent object. It is in these plain and dogmatical instructions, however, that such expressions ought of necessity to be found. Why do they not appear? Why are the bread and wine never presented to us is this simple point of view, so plain and easy to our conception? Why, on the contrary, are we perpetually reminded every time that it is the true and real body of Jesus Christ, the body that was crucified, the blood that flowed from his side, and that a change of substance is

¹ Hom. on the *Pasch.*

effected by the all-powerful word of a God? And why do the Fathers, to establish the certitude of this astonishing change, and to give additional motives of its credibility, remind the neophytes of the wonders of the creation, the miracles of Moses, Elias, and Eliseus, of the birth of Christ, the miracle of the marriage feast of Cana, and that of the multiplication of the loaves? Would it not be the height of folly to search heaven and earth for the greatest prodigies ever worked therein by an almighty power, merely for the purpose of proving to these neophytes, that a God made man, had most evidently the power of changing also the bread and wine into the *signs and figures* of his body and blood, a thing which the poorest mortal among us can declare and do, whenever he pleases.

Again, Sir, let me ask you, how, in your opinion, will your modern notions respecting the Eucharist, accord with the following exhortation of St. John Chrysostom? ¹ “When you approach the holy table, believe that the King of all things is there present; for he is really present..... Consider,² what a victim you have to handle, what a table you have to approach; think within yourselves that, being but dust and ashes, you receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ..... Consider³ that we eat Him, who sits on high and is adored by the angels..... O wonderful mystery!⁴ O the goodness of God! He who sits on high with his Father, is received into the hand of every one! How I should wish, do many exclaim, to behold his countenance and his garments! God grants you even more than you desire—he gives you himself; you receive him, you eat him in reality.”

And when your teachers mount the pulpit to communicate to you their cherished and boasted conceptions respecting the sacrament, will they address you in the language of St. Hilary?⁵ “It would be foolish and impious to say what we do of the natural verity of Christ within us, if he himself had not taught us it, for it is he that said: my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed: he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my

¹ Hom. on the Seraphim. ² On the Nativity. ³ On the Ep. to the Hebrews. ⁴ On the priesthood. B. III. ⁵ B. VIII. On the Trinity.

blood, abideth in me, and I in him : he leaves no place to doubt of the reality of his body and blood ; for now by the profession of the Lord himself, and according to our belief, it is truly flesh and truly blood.....”

Will they say with St. Augustine:¹ “Does it not appear foolish and extravagant to say, eat my flesh and drink my blood : he that doth not eat my flesh and drink my blood, shall not have life in him ? It did indeed appear foolish and extravagant ; but only to the ignorant and the foolish.” Have you ever heard your preachers adopt language similar to that which has been quoted above ? How, in fact, should they speak the language, having so openly repudiated the doctrine of antiquity ?

I had proposed here to conclude my observations on the doctrine of the Fathers, and to close a discussion that you must by this time perceive to be decisively terminated. But the subject is inexhaustible : these ancient writings still detain me by force among them : proofs in profusion start up on every side of me. You have just learned their sentiments and expressions respecting the majesty and sublimity of the mystery, and the insurmountable difficulties attendant upon the belief of the real presence and transubstantiation, I would willingly proceed a step further, and shew you, that they have been not less alive to the striking consequences deducible from such doctrines, nor less distinct and clear in developing the same. In fact, if the bread be really changed into the body of Christ, it is correct to say with Gelasius of Cizicum and St. Chrysostom ; “ that the body is proposed to us, that the lamb is lying before us ;” with St. Cyril of Alexandria, “ that it is not the Deity, but the body of the Word that is presented upon the sacred tables of the Church ;” with Optatus of Milevis ; that the members of Christ are stretched upon the altar : that the altar is the seat of the body and blood of Christ,” with St. Augustine ; “ that we receive with faithful heart and mouth the mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ made man, who gave us his body to eat and his blood to

¹ Discourse on Ps. XXXIII.

drink, although it seems more horrible to eat the flesh of a man than to kill him, to drink human blood than to shed it."

If the body of Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist, his body must either be received in part, or whole and entire, by each communicant. We hold that each communicant receives the entire and indivisible body of Jesus Christ. This dogma, supposing as it does, his simultaneous presence in a thousand places, we look upon as a wonderful miracle, capable of raising doubts, which are to be dissipated by faith and confidence in the all-powerful word of God. Now we find that this wonder has struck the minds and excited the astonishment of the Fathers. "We must consider, says St. Gregory of Nyssa,¹ how it can be that this single body, being distributed to thousands of the faithful should be found whole and entire in each person who receives it, and still remain whole and entire in itself."

This question evidently supposes the unity and indivisibility of the body of Christ in every receiver to have been believed and taught. The reply, as you are prepared to expect, attempts not to explain the mystery, but proves the change of substance in the Eucharist. The power of the Word, who as man was nourished with bread, rendered the bread that he eat his holy body. In like manner, this bread is sanctified by the word of God and prayer, not passing into the body of the Word, by eating and drinking, but being instantly changed into the body of the Word, according to what he said: this is my body."

"We always offer the same victim, says St. Chrysostom.² not as in the old law, sometimes one and sometimes another: here it is always the same, for which reason there is but one sacrifice: for, if the diversity of places, in which the sacrifice is offered, multiplied the sacrifice, we should have to allow that there were many Christs. But there is but one Christ, who is entire here and entire there, possessing still but one body: for which reason there is but one sacrifice." He who receives but a part of the consecrated species, says St. Eutychius,³ receives, notwithstand-

¹ Catech. Dis. ch. XXXVII. ² Hom. on the Epistle to the Heb. ³ Fragments preserved in Nicetas.

ing, whole and entire the most holy body and the adorable blood of the Lord: for although the body be distributed to all, being mingled up with each of them, it nevertheless always remains indivisible in itself, as one only seal, being employed to make many impressions on wax, leaves at each impression its perfect figure and form and still remains one and the same, neither changed nor divided by its image being stamped upon a multiplicity of objects."

If Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist, it follows that, when he communicated with his apostles, he bore his own body in his hands, and drank his own blood. The consequence is rigorously correct: and you shall now see whether the Fathers were aware of it. St. Augustine explaining the title of psalm XXXIII. in which it is said, according to the Septuagint, *that he was carried in his own hands*, expresses himself as follows: "Who can comprehend, my bretheren, how such a thing can be performed by a man? Who is it that holds himself in his own hands? A man may indeed be held in the hands of another, but never in his own. We cannot therefore discover how this can be understood of David *in the literal sense*: but can easily see how it can be understood of Christ *according to the letter*; for Christ bore himself in his own hands, when giving his body to us, he said: "This is my body, for he then bore that body in his own hands."

"Jesus Christ," says St. Chrysostom,¹ "himself drank from his chalice, least his apostles hearing these his words should say within themselves: Do we then drink his blood and eat his flesh! and be troubled at the thought; for, when he spoke of these mysteries, many were scandalized. To prevent this trouble and to remove all uneasiness from their minds, in their participation of the mysteries he set the first example; and this was the reason why *he drank his own blood*." St. Jerome declares;² "Moses gave us not the true bread; but our Lord Jesus did. He invites us to the feast and is himself our meat: he eats with us

¹ Hom. LXXXIII. on St. Matthew. ² Epist. ad, Hedib.

and we receive and eat him." Would such ideas ever enter into the heads of Calvinists, would they ever had come into the minds of the Fathers, had they not been convinced of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament which he instituted at his last supper?¹

To put a finishing stroke to our proofs and a termination to our reflections already too protracted, it is most evident that the Fathers believed and taught the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, if they positively instructed the faithful and the neophytes never to approach but with sentiments of true and perfect adoration. Now the Fathers have not failed to inculcate this precept, and to require of them, together with the sentiments, the attitude also of adoration, at the moment of their approach to the holy table. "Each one must in his turn receive the body and blood of the Lord, with the reverence and the fear due to the body of such a King."² "Approach the chalice, says St. Cyril of Jerusalem,³ not stretching out your hands, but bending towards the earth in a posture of adoration, to pay your homage." St. Ambrose⁴ bears testimony to this practice in the churches. The following explanation supposes its existence: "We must say, therefore, that his footstool is the earth; and by the earth we must understand the flesh of Christ, *which to this day we adore in the holy mysteries*, and which the apostles adored formerly in his person." Saint Augustine,⁵ adopting the explanation of his master in religious belief, bears equal testimony to the fact in these words: "No one eating this flesh, *without having first adored it*." And on these words of another psalm: the rich ones of the earth have eaten and adored, he says:⁶

¹ "We must then believe that Jesus Christ put himself into his mouth;" exclaims J. J. Rosseau in a tone of triumph against the mystery of our Eucharist, as if he had discovered something as original as sarcastic. He, knew full well that venerable antiquity had thought of this long before his time and that this most just consequence, incomprehensible though it be to human intellect, had in no wise shaken the reliance due to the word of a God-man in the mind of the great archbishop of Constantinople, of the learned solitary of Bethlehem, and of all the most enlightened characters of the primitive ages. ² Const. Ap. lib. II. ³ Catech. IV. mystery. ⁴ On the Holy Spirit, B. III. ⁵ On Psalm XCVIII. ⁶ Epist. ad. Honor.

“The rich ones, that is, the proud have also been admitted to the table of Jesus Christ; they participate¹ in his body and blood, but they adore only and are not refreshed.” and St. Chrysostom:² “The magi formerly testified their respect to this divine body, when lying in the crib. These Gentiles *adored* him with respectful fear and profound veneration. You behold it not in the crib; but on the altar; not in the arms of a woman, but in the hands of the priest, and under the wings of the Holy Spirit who descends with powerful influence upon the oblations. Let us therefore excite ourselves..... and with reverential awe let us surpass even the magi in the marks of our veneration of the body of Christ.”³

¹ On Ps. XCVIII. ² Hom. on I. Cor.

³ Compare the above instructions and practice with those presented by your English Church at the present day to members of its communion. They too evidently appear in the declaration issued under Edward VI., suppressed afterwards by the politic Elizabeth, but again re-established in the form in which it still appears at the end of the communion service, under the reign of Charles II., who agreed to it, either from weakness or through compulsion, but undoubtedly contrary to his own principles and convictions, as may be learned from two documents in his own hand writing discovered after his death by his brother James II. who certifies their authenticity. Now this declaration turns upon the manner prescribed of receiving communion on the knees: “It is here declared, that no *adoration* is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the sacramental bread and wine there *bodily* received, or *unto any corporal presence* of Christ’s natural flesh and blood. For the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore *may not be adored* (for that were idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians,) and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here, it being against the truth of Christ’s natural body to be at one time in more places than one.”

This declaration is manifestly directed against transubstantiation, since it is there said that the bread and wine are *bodily* received, and preserve their natural substance! It attacks, or at least denies any presence of Christ, by the mere fact of suppressing adoration; for, if, while excluding from the Eucharist a *corporal* presence of the *natural* body of Christ, they had permitted the belief of a sacramental presence of his glorified and spiritualized body, so far from suppressing, they must undoubtedly have united with antiquity in paying adoration, which is not less due to the sacramental presence of the glorified body than to the corporal presence of the natural body of this divine person.

How painful to me was the discovery of such expressions attached to your rubric actually in force at the present day! How I deplore the condition of those, who from their earliest youth unconsciously imbibe the poison of such a doctrine! Language has not terms to expose such a declaration in its own disgraceful enor-

You are now enabled to observe the close connexion between our particular and general proofs, the light mutually imparted by them, and that accordance from which they both derive additional strength. In fact, these dogmas, which the discipline of the Church obliged the Christians to conceal from the unbelievers and the catechumens, were the very same that were disclosed and explained to the neophytes previous to their admission to a participation of the Eucharist.¹ Now we have seen that they were made acquainted with the altar and the sacrifice, the real presence and the unbloody immolation of the victim, the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ,

mity: it can only be effaced by tears. From the re-publication of this declaration in 1662, may, in my judgment, be dated the unfortunate epoch, when sacramentarian opinions began to prevail in the English Church. This Church had formally rejected them under James I. and Charles I. "The King acknowledges Jesus Christ truly *present* and truly *adorable* in the Eucharist." And again: "We adore with St. Ambrose, the flesh of Jesus Christ in these mysteries."*

"The sounder (and more sensible) protestants, make no hesitation to adore Christ in the Eucharist. For in receiving the Eucharist, CHRIST IS TO BE ADORED WITH TRUE LATERA. †..... 'Tis a monstrous error of the original protestants, who maintain that Christ is not to be adored in the Eucharist, except by an inward adoration of mind, but not with any outward act of adoration, such as kneeling or other such posture of the body. All these do not believe aright of the presence of Christ in the Sacrament, he being present there in a wonderful but real manner." ‡

"I suppose the body and blood of Christ may be adored, wheresoever they are; and must be adored by a good Christian, where the custom of the Church, which a Christian is obliged to communicate with, requires it. And is not the presence thereof in the sacrament of the Eucharist, a just occasion to express on the spot, by that bodily act of adoration, the inward honor, which we always bear towards our Lord Jesus Christ, as God? ||.....: Not to balk that pardon, which hath led me to publish these my sentiments: I do believe that it was so practised (adoration was paid) and done before receiving the symbols in the ancient Church; which I maintain, to have been from the beginning the true Church of Christ, obliging all to conform to it, in all things within the power of it. §

¹ What have we in the Church concealed from the public? The sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, for our good works are seen by the Pagans, while the sacraments remain concealed from them. But it is precisely the thing they do not see that give rise to that which strikes them in our conduct. St. Aug. on Ps. CIII. vol. IV. p. 1140.

* Bish. Andrews in his reply to Card. Bellarmin, in the name of James I. † Bish. Forbes, Treatise on the Euch. B. II. ch. II. sec. 9. ‡ Ibid. sec. 8. || Thorndike, Epil. B. III. c. 30. p. 350. § Thorndike, Epil. B. 3, c. 30. p. 351.

and consequently the necessity of adoration in receiving them. These dogmas are therefore demonstrated to have been effectually concealed under the discipline of secrecy. This, good sense had led us to suppose, and reasoning had improved our supposition into conviction. But now facts speak aloud, and fairly and perfectly demonstrate the results of reason and argument.

And because this instruction of the neophytes, with the exclusion of the catechumens, is as ancient as Christianity, it follows that the doctrines, in which they were instructed previous to communion are of an origin equally ancient and apostolical. Again, the instructions delivered to the neophytes turned upon what they were soon to behold upon the altar, on the essential part of the liturgy, at which they were for the first time to assist, on the prayers they were to hear, and on the worship rendered by the faithful to Jesus Christ. It is then certain that the altar, the sacrifice, the victim, its immolation, its presence effected by the change of the gifts offered, the adoration of it, all dogmas then made known to the neophytes, formed an essential part of the liturgy. Thus the chain of our proofs is unbroken and complete. The private instructions given to the neophytes, plainly shew what was kept concealed from the catechumens and unbelievers, as also every thing essential connected with the practice of the Christians in the liturgies. Such, Sir, is the character of truth; the more it is examined, the more plain and manifest does it appear: the more it is scrutinised in all its bearings, the more solid and satisfactory it is found.

And now, Sir, if those illustrious prelates of the primitive Church, a Cyril of Jerusalem or Alexandria, a Chrysostom of Constantinople, an Ambrose of Milan, were called to life again, and appearing in your religious assemblies, heard your preachers declaiming against the doctrine in which they had been nurtured full fourteen or fifteen centuries ago, and which they themselves had most religiously inculcated to their neophytes and their flocks, what, let me ask you, would be their language, in such circumstances? What would they say, if, assisting at your public service, and finding neither altar nor sacrifice, nor the invocation

for the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, they heard the people publicly cautioned to beware how they entertained any sentiment of adoration, seeing that the sacrament was but bread and wine, that Christ was not there present, but was solely and unceasingly in heaven? What would they say, I ask you? Would they not be agitated with feelings of horror, indignation and pity? Would they not consider themselves to be among the enemies of Christ, rather than among his faithful adorers? Would they not lament their lot in being again restored to life?

But, without insisting any further on the sentiments and feelings they would unavoidably experience, permit me to make a simple statement of my own. I have applied myself to the study of the ancient liturgies, and have not failed to compare them with the liturgy employed by your Church. I have also paid attention to the doctrine of the Fathers respecting the Eucharist, and have discovered but too plainly those precise doctrines, which your preachers and controversialists so thoughtlessly and unmercifully assail. How completely are the primitive liturgies and your liturgy at variance! How meager and dry is the latter! How poor and pitiful are the prayers filched from us and left mangled and imperfect by the barbarous hand of the awkward plagiarist, a monstrous and disgusting spectacle to the admirer of pure and venerable antiquity! What a figure would it present, if I were to dwell upon that heterodox and monstrous declaration, that terrified the protestants under Elizabeth, and yet was fearlessly and shamelessly appended to your liturgy under Charles II! As for your preachers, their instructions do not even correspond with the prayers recited by them in what is called *the Lord's Supper*. Whatever appears inexplicable in the words of Christ they reject; the mysteries transmitted by the ancient Fathers, they impugn, and teach their flocks to do the same—they reason and argue where reason, coalescing with authority, imperatively calls for their silent acquiescence. In vain does St. Hilary¹ insist “that we must not pretend to regulate the effects

¹ On the Trinity, B. III.

of divine power by the ideas of man; that wisdom consists in placing no bounds to the power of God; that it would be downright folly and impiety to assert what we do assert of the real and natural truth of Jesus Christ's presence with us, if he had not himself declared it to be so." They will have nothing to do with St. Hilary, or his doctrine: and instead of uniting with him in receiving the declaration of the Lord preferably to the information of their senses, they cherish by preference the dictates of their proud and indocile senses, and reject the asseveration of the God of truth. In vain does St. Ambrose¹ proclaim, "I ask no reason of Jesus Christ..... Wherefore talk not to me of arguments, when faith is required: let dialectic be silent in the schools. Stop your mouth: you may not search into mysteries. We are permitted to know that the Son has been begotten, but not to require in what manner it was effected." Your ministers, far from imposing silence on dialectic in their schools, make its voice resound from their pulpits: far from stopping their mouths, they declaim against mysteries; and because they cannot comprehend how Christ can be present in the Eucharist, they authoritatively pronounce that he is not, and cannot be present in the sacred mysteries.² In vain does St. Chrysostom beautifully advise them as follows: "I receive with submission what the scripture says, and pry not into things on which it is silent. I understand what it discovers, and have no wish to investigate what it veils in obscurity, for the very purpose of deterring me from such researches.³..... Why do you labor to fathom that which is unfathomable? Why attempt to comprehend things incomprehensible? Why be ambitious to penetrate into that which is impenetrable?⁴..... Pretend not to judge of things divine by reason, neither attempt to subject them to the laws of nature. For by so doing, Nicodemus became incapable of conceiving great and sublime truths. We receive the name of faithful,

¹ On Abraham. ² The manner in which Calvinists receive the Sacrament, is precisely the same as that in which Catholics partake of it, by merely assisting at mass, when they do not actually communicate. See on this subject the little German work of *prayers at mass*. ³ Hom. on the Seraphim. ⁴ Hom. IV. on St. John.

that, spurning the lowliness of human imaginations, we may rise to the sublimities of faith..... Let us believe God in all things, and gainsay him not, although what he says appears to be contrary to the *testimony of our eyes and our reason*. Let the authority of his word supersede the testimony of our eyes and our reason. Since therefore his word said, *this is my body*, let us rest satisfied and believe, let us behold it with the eyes of faith."¹ In vain does St. Ephrem² exclaim in language peculiarly applicable to your teachers. "What are you about, ye dying mortals? Is it not the extreme of folly and temerity, in you who are but a compound of dust, to think of fathoming such an abyss? Partake of the immaculate body and the blood of the Lord with a full and firm faith, and doubt not that you eat the lamb whole and entire: for the mysteries of Christ are an immortal fire. Beware of rashly searching into them, lest they consume you when you partake thereof." In vain does Cyril, the great bishop and Patriarch of Alexandria,³ admonish them so long before, "that it is not becoming to abandon the ancient tradition of the faith, derived from the apostles to our times for mere subtleties of such a character, and to subject to an idle curiosity mysteries that exceed the powers of our minds; that we must not even call them in question, or follow the example of some, who regardless, of their own peril, have the hardiness to decide upon articles of faith, approving or rejecting them, as seems good to themselves. *Is it not more reasonable* to commit to God the knowledge of his own works, than impiously to carp at what he has thought proper to do?..... They indeed had the hardiness to ask how, as if they were ignorant that such language was blasphemy, &c."⁴ One might imagine that these great masters of antiquity these venerable successors of the apostles, even at the distance of so many centuries, were thinking of your teachers, and were delivering these keen reproaches as a lesson to them in person. But your teachers are deaf to such monitions; they will have nothing to do with these charming models of Christian

¹ Hom. XXIII. on St. John. ² Treatise against curiosity in searching into the Divine Nature. ³ On faith. ⁴ See this passage in the following Appendix.

eloquence and philosophy; nothing to do with these illustrious and admirable defences of Jesus Christ: they are desirous of taking lessons and examples from the seditious promoters of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century—these are their masters—these their models. The children have surpassed their fathers: without difficulty I concede this superiority to your teachers. Yet, in each are discoverable in the main, the same presumption, and the same mode of conduct. In your teachers are to be found united together the school of the cell of Wittemburg, and of the presbytery of Zurich; for they attack, at one time, the real presence, at another, the change of substance, and at all times the adoration, which they even convert into idolatry. Thus then their dialectic is unbendingly decisive, their philosophy earthly, their ideas low, their notions contracted and dry, and their declamation as modern as their origin. In their works upon the Eucharist, I discover throughout aridity, novelty, and therefore falsity of doctrine. Every thing wears the appearance and characteristic features of youth: whatever may command veneration, awake the recollection of primitive forms, or bear the rugged and sacred impress of antiquity, is sought among their writings in vain.

To this you will reply: our teachers and apologists are very far from considering themselves as isolated from antiquity: their language is that of men connecting us more intimately with it: even on the Eucharist they claim the authority of the Fathers: from them they produce a thousand passages in support of the figurative sense; with these their works are filled, as you must of necessity allow.

All this is very true, Sir, but the great point is to ascertain from what writings these passages are extracted, and whether they do not claim with better title an explanation different from the one which your ministers have palmed upon them. After the passages I have cited, replete as they evidently are with Catholic doctrine, it must be acknowledged that the Fathers could never have taught elsewhere the protestant doctrine, without the most palpable contradiction: And rest assured that there

is no contradiction to be found in them: that they are true to their principles throughout; and that, if their expressions were not always the same, the reason is, because it was both impossible and improper that they should be so.

For the space of four centuries and more, during which the secret discipline was enforced, the Fathers must always have measured their expressions respecting the Eucharist according to circumstances. When they spoke or wrote exclusively for the faithful, they could without reserve explain the mystery: the same unreservedness must also have attended their first instructions to the neophytes. Not so, however, when they preached before the catechumens and the non-initiated: not so, when they wrote for the public. On such occasions, the apprehension of betraying the secret compelled them to adopt obscure and ambiguous expressions. Now the far greater portion of their discourses and writings were produced in these critical and perilous circumstances; consequently they must more frequently have expressed themselves with reservedness, than with unrestrained freedom. At the same time, these measured expressions, this ambiguous phraseology, while they withheld from unbelievers the adorable mysteries; failed not to discover them to the Christians, and were in fact such expressions as naturally presented themselves to the mind of the holy Fathers. They sprang from the very nature of the Eucharist, which is composed of two parts, the one exterior and sensible, the other internal and invisible: the former terrestrial, the latter celestial: the one presenting to our eyes the appearances of bread and wine, the latter proposing to our faith the true and real body and blood of Christ, present, but invisible. Under the former point of view, it is a sacrament, a sign; a symbol; under the latter, it is the true and real body and blood of Jesus Christ, the body that was born of the blessed virgin, and was nailed to the cross: the blood that flowed from his side, and purified the earth. When therefore the Fathers had to disguise the mysteries, they had only to confine their expressions to the exterior appearances, and designate them according as they fell under the cognizance of the senses: and the faithful

instructed in the doctrine, had no difficulty in penetrating the veil, and passed on from the sensible appearances to the unseen reality. The Fathers spoke the truth—but did not say all the truth. They spoke the truth: for, considering the external part alone, the Eucharist is bread and wine: it is a type, figure, symbol, sign or sacrament: and we Catholics to this day frequently employ the same expressions. They spoke not all the truth: for they were silent upon the invisible and principal part, which as it must be known to the faithful alone, and not discovered to any but the neophytes, was concealed from the rest, and clearly developed to them alone. Such, most assuredly was the situation of the Fathers for more than four centuries: generally constrained to adopt a mysterious phraseology, occasionally at liberty to speak openly to the faithful, and in duty bound, on the great solemnities of Easter and Whitsuntide, to expound them clearly and explicitly to the neophytes. The Fathers therefore were true to their principles, varying their expressions according to circumstances, accommodating themselves to their readers and hearers; obscure and reserved to the non-initiated, clear to the faithful, and dogmatical to the neophytes.

After the lapse of many centuries, our age has been distinguished by the expedient resorted to on the part of your controversialists, who, to prop up their opinions by the authority of tradition, have gone in quest of numerous passages in the ecclesiastical writings, where the Fathers were evidently constrained to speak with reserve, and confine their expressions to what was external and sensible in the Eucharist. Had they been honestly in search of the doctrine believed and taught in the primitive ages, instead of consulting writings in which the Fathers were under the necessity of veiling their thoughts, they would have preferred those in which their inmost belief was necessarily brought to light. Why do not your teachers prefer the society of the faithful and the neophytes, and listen with them to the discourses delivered, with closed and guarded doors, by Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose of Milan, Chrysostom of Antioch and Constantinople, Gaudentius of Brescia, &c., &c.? Why, after the conclusion

of the instruction, do they not assist at the liturgy immediately succeeding? Why do they not follow the priest to the altar? Wherefore not repeat with the pontiff, the admirable supplications addressed to heaven? Wherefore not advance to the sacred table together with the faithful, and the recently admitted Christians, who for the first time are going to participate in the holy mysteries and adore them? He who at the present time seeks to become acquainted with the primitive belief, would naturally adopt this method. It is the only rational way of proceeding. But your instructors turn to the writings that were published to the world, sit down with the catechumens and listen to their instructions. Acting thus they meet only with a few allusions to the Eucharist, thrown out on the way, or accidentally introduced by the subject. Assuredly there is nothing here to be learned but the passing and trifling information that the Fathers thought proper to communicate to the initiated; and it is not at all to be wondered at that your instructors should discover no additional elucidation of the subject, so long as they persist in associating themselves with the catechumens. Let them join the initiated, and the bandage will be removed from their eyes, and all obscurity will be at an end; if after this they mingle with the catechumens, the enigmatical discourses there delivered will be no longer to them a subject of embarrassment. Like the rest of the faithful, they will catch the hidden meaning designedly concealed under ambiguous expressions; and will know how to pass from the veil and appearance, to the object that is veiled and signified.¹

¹“We call it also a mystery, for another reason; which is, that we believe not what we behold, but behold one thing, and believe another: for such is the nature of our mysteries. I, who am a believer, consider a thing after one manner; and the unbeliever considers the same thing after another. When he hears speak of baptism, he considers only the water; but I, not only consider the visible matter, but much more the purification of the soul effected by the Holy Spirit, not judging by the eyes of the body of what appears there but by the eyes of the soul. In like manner, when I hear mentioned the body of Jesus Christ, I conceive what is said, in one way, the unbeliever considers it in another: and as children, looking into books, know not the power and signification of the letters and understand not what they see; and as, when an illiterate person receives a letter, he sees nothing but ink and paper, while one who can read, discovers words,

If the professors of the protestant religion had pursued this proper and simple method, they would not have lost their time and labor in accumulating passages, in which the Fathers referring, as behoved them, to nothing more than the sensible part of the Eucharist, have described it under the appellations of bread and wine, of a sign, a figure, a type, a symbol and a sacrament:¹ and Catholic polemics would not have been obliged to compose so many works to explain the multitude of passages, which never will prove any thing else, than that they spoke obscurely of the mystery, when it was impossible for them to do otherwise.²

I am, however, far from wishing to deal fraudulently with you, and take you by surprise: if you still are in doubt and uncertainty as to the doctrine of the Fathers touching the Eucharist, you are perfectly at liberty to communicate this letter and also the foregoing ones, to any of your instructors whom you wish to consult. I have but one request to make; which is, that, if they still pretend to have the Fathers on their side, you will require them to produce those writings, in which the Fathers were bound to explain themselves clearly and distinctly. Insist upon their bringing forward the instructions delivered to the neophytes between their baptism and communion. Tell them that this is what they are bound to do for you. For, most undoubtedly, then was the time to explain in what the mysteries precisely consisted; then must the development have been made, of what they were to know and what they were to profess. Consequently, it is from these dogmatical and elementary documents that we

communicates with an absent friend, and can convey what answer he pleases in reply: so is it with the mysteries: although unbelievers hear them spoken of, they do not understand them: but the faithful being instructed by the Holy Spirit, know the virtue and efficacy of what is there concealed." St. Chrysostom, in his discourse on the treason of Judas.

¹ These expressions we ourselves are continually employing. They are found used by those Fathers, who most clearly establish the doctrine of the real presence and transubstantiation. Recollect here the remarks we have made together on this particular.

² M. Nicole, among others, has, with unwearied industry, entered upon a lengthened discussion of all the texts objected by his adversaries; and has demonstrated (the term is not too strong) that they are all reconcileable with the Catholic doctrine and that there is not a single one that is inconsistent with it.

now learn to a certainty what the prelates taught, what they had learned from their predecessors, and their predecessors from the apostles. Of this you cannot be too frequently reminded. Let your ministers produce, if they can, one single dogmatical instruction of the above description, in which it is declared to the neophytes, before their admission to the communion, "that the communion is received kneeling for the avoiding all such profanation and disorder as might otherwise ensue; for a signification of our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given: that no adoration is intended or ought to be done, either unto the body of Christ, or the sacramental bread or wine, for that the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances and ought not to be adored, and the natural body and blood of our Saviour is in heaven and not here: it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one."¹ Where will they find that such language was ever employed to the newly-baptised? The opposite is the fact: in the most distinct terms, it is the adoration of Jesus Christ present in an ineffable manner, by a change of nature in the gifts offered: it is the same body that was born of a virgin, the same blood that was shed upon the cross, to which we are bound to pay upon the altar, a still more profound adoration than the magi paid to him in the crib; no one receives them without having first adored them; and so far is it from being sinful to adore him, that we should sin by not adoring him.

This you have seen—you have heard the catechetical instructions given to the neophytes. Others than these I know not of. Were there such, or could additional ones be discovered, they would not be found to contain the doctrine of your Church. For it is impossible that they should have believed and taught at the same time the figure and the reality, the change and not the change of substance; impossible they should have taught that the heavenly and eucharistic bread must be adored, and that this adoration would be idolatry.

¹ The words and sense of the declaration, concluding your liturgy, are at shocking variance with all the ancient liturgies.

I leave you, Sir, to reflect soberly and candidly on what you have learned respecting the important question that fills the last five letters. When you have done this, I must request your attention to a proof of a totally different character. Putting aside all discussion of texts and monuments, I undertake to prove that the doctrine of the Catholic Church on the Eucharist necessarily goes back to the apostles. The argument will be somewhat abstract and metaphysical: I do not however believe it to be above the reach of ordinary capacities: it must in my opinion, suffice to convince every reasonable mind. We will then, for a moment, forget all that we have discovered from scripture, the secret discipline, the liturgies and testimonies of the Fathers, and in place of authority we will listen to reason alone. I start with you from a fact, and I say: At whatever point of time you may choose to fix upon, at the precise time, if you please, that we are now discussing this question, millions of persons, differing in climate, customs, nations, governments, prejudices and religious communions, all agree, not only in believing in the change of substance and the adoration in the Eucharist, but in believing in them as dogmas believed and taught in all preceding ages. The above proposition demands your most serious attention: re-peruse it, before you proceed further. You have read the most authentic testimonies on the belief of the Greek and Oriental Churches;¹ You know that, upon these dogmas, they are perfectly in accordance with the Latin Churches—It is certain that they, like ourselves, believe in these doctrines, as having been invariably believed by preceding generations. This being established, I pass on: and I maintain that from this fact we of necessity have a right to infer nothing less than the apostolicity of these dogmas. In fact, although it be customary to divide the generations of men, and count four of them to a century, it is evident notwithstanding that they are neither distinctly separated nor independent of each other, but greatly intermixed, and linked one within another, so that a very considerable proportion of

¹ See all these testimonies carefully collected in the *Grandé Perpetuite du la Foi*, in Abbe Renaudot et pere Lebrun,

persons existing in any given generation, belong also to the one preceding. - Whence it follows that a very considerable proportion of persons existing at any given epoch, are perfectly acquainted with what was believed and taught in the preceding generation, particularly when the dogmas are of great importance, connected with daily and general observance, and requiring of each individual the most sacred acts of religion, as is the case with the dogmas of the Eucharist. If such doctrines are not to be retraced to the apostles, there must have been some later period, when, for the first time, they sprang to light, and were taught and believed in the world. But at this epoch, when, for the first time, mention was made of it, a very great proportion of persons then living, knew for certain that not a word had been said about it the day before, neither had it been mentioned in the preceding generation; they knew perfectly, for example, that instead of the reality nothing more than the figure had been recognised; instead of the change of substance, nothing but bread and wine, instead of adoration, nothing more than a recollection of spirit. Well then! Sir, supposing that I admit, what, nevertheless, is inadmissible, that these same persons consented to pass from the figure to the reality, from the substance of the bread to that of the body, from recollection to adoration, they must have gone over, to say the least, to what they considered a novel opinion and a novel practice: but in substituting them for the opinion and practice with which they had till then been acquainted, it is utterly impossible that they should have adopted them as having been held and taught during the preceding generation—the contrary would be notoriously manifest to all; the falsity of the fact too evident to admit such a persuasion. It is contrary to nature that so great a proportion of mankind should spontaneously or from persuasion, with one impulse, unite in admitting as true, what they all positively knew to be false. I cannot conceive a man to exist so much the victim of folly as to propose to his fellow creature to believe that, as the doctrine and faith of the year before, which he knows, which they all know, was no such thing: and were an individual found extravagant

enough to venture upon such an experiment, the nature of things and good sense alike forbid us to suppose that success would crown his enterprise. And yet, if our dogmas on the Eucharist were not derived from the apostles, it would inevitably follow, that in some intermediate generation, men began to hold them, as the belief of their predecessors, although most notoriously they had never been so. There is an absurdity in this hypothesis that is quite repugnant to our moral constitution. Consequently, it is proved that these doctrines are apostolical, by the naked and single fact that so many persons of the present day believe them, as having been believed and taught in preceding generations, and reaching from our age to that of the apostles inclusively.

We are at length arrived at the termination of this protracted dissertation, upon which I entered to justify the decrees of the Church upon the Eucharist, and in reply to the difficulties proposed by you. Our investigation has entirely turned upon the simple question of fact, whether the Catholic dogmas were revealed by Jesus Christ. We have alternately examined the scripture and tradition, the channels through which revelation is transmitted to us; from each of these we have been supplied with clear and abundant proofs of the Catholic doctrine: in each we have discovered that the real presence and the change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ were certainly revealed by our Lord. You can no longer entertain any reasonable doubt concerning the truth of this fact. You must now come to a determination: you can no longer be permitted to waver and hesitate: your own reason will rise up in judgment against you, if you delay for a moment to pay to Christ that adoration, which his divine presence in the sacrament of his altars imperatively requires.

To this you will reply: "The consequence you draw is just, it is inevitable: yet notwithstanding, this simultaneous presence in many places, this change of substance, without any external indication of the same, and while even the appearances remain afterwards the same as before! how can I submit to this, how

can I believe it?" If you must be enabled to conceive and understand, before you are to believe the doctrine, I must at once give up the task: for I am acquainted with no means of enabling you to conceive what I myself am as incapable of conceiving as you are. But since when, let me ask you, have men considered themselves authorized to deny what is most clearly demonstrated by facts, on the ground that in theory it presented obscurity? Since when have they presumed to reject the most solidly established dogma in religion, on the plea of its baffling their conceptions, while in the order of nature we admit, as indeed we ought to do, without cavil or doubt, thousands and thousands of effects, without the remotest possibility of our conceiving how they have been caused in a single instance? The incomprehensibility of a mystery does not diminish its truth and certainty. Now, it is both rational and natural for us to yield to manifest proofs, without presuming to search for a reason that is hidden from us. Believe then and doubt not, that Jesus Christ is really present: that the bread and wine no longer subsist, because they are become his body and blood, believe it, immediately you are convinced that he himself has so declared. Proceed no further: bound your enquiry where the clearness of revelation abandons you and obscurity begins its reign. Leave to God the accomplishment of what he has been pleased to reveal. He will execute his purposes by ways known only to himself. Do not harass your mind by discussing whether these ways are or are not agreeable with the principles of your reason, and waste not your time in judging and deciding whether it be that these principles must be absolutely false, or that God has ways unknown to men by which he operates his mysteries, without injury to their principles.¹ So, when you find the ministers of the protestant religion dilating with complacency on the difficulties of the Eucharist, and displaying its pretended impossibilities, adhere firmly to what revelation teaches on this subject. Call to mind the words of our Saviour, when he promised to give us his body to

¹ "For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts, saith the Lord." *Isaias* v. 9.

eat, and his blood to drink, and when he performed his promise, on the eve of his passion. Call to mind the doctrine and the belief of the apostles, and the first Christians; the discipline, coeval with christianity, respecting the secrecy that hid these mysterious dogmas in the breasts of the faithful: call to mind the liturgies of the fifth age, all of which express the same dogmas in glowing terms, and whose uniformity proclaims their apostolical descent: call to mind that the primitive Fathers developed the same belief with the greatest clearness when they spoke free and unrestrained in presence of the faithful alone, or when they were instructing the neophytes in what it was necessary for them to know before being admitted to partake of the holy communion: think, in fine, of the moral impossibility of our belief being ever established, such as it now exists, unless it be supposed to derive its origin from Jesus Christ himself.

All the proofs, attesting this point of revelation are most certain: the metaphysical arguments brought forward against them are far from being so, they leave them totally untouched. The former are within the comprehension of our minds: the latter are far beyond the limits of human intelligence. We cannot therefore, without overthrowing the laws of good sense, throw aside plain and palpable proofs, to cling to conceptions that, to say the least of them, are founded on no certainty and are hazardous in the extreme. If, however, such metaphysical difficulties should rise up in our imagination, they must be driven away: proofs built upon facts must be introduced into their place: on such occasions, raise up your heart to heaven, whence all revelation is derived; take refuge under the Divine Majesty which veils its own mystery, and forbids you to examine it with too curious an eye: place all your confidence in him who proposes it to you, and, at the moment of communion, cry out to him with St. Peter, with the apostles and the Christians of all ages: Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Son of the living God, and that thou hast the words of eternal life. This is the clear and luminous side of the column: fix your eyes upon this together with the chosen people of God, and you cannot fail of being secure:

whereas you will be infallibly lost like the Egyptians, if you place yourself with them on the side that diffuses nothing but darkness and uncertainty. This mixture of light and darkness, which is equally found in the order of nature as in religion, was no doubt intended for the trial of our faith during the days of our pilgrimage: with our earthly pilgrimage it will terminate: then shall the veil be withdrawn and the truth be clearly laid open to our eyes: then to our astonishment shall we find the simplicity of all that, which at present confounds and defies the ingenuity and imagination of man.

In the mean time, thus let us argue the point: it would no doubt be a madness to believe, on the testimony of man, what we do believe respecting the Eucharist: but there would be a thousand times more madness in refusing to believe it on the positive testimony of our Saviour. You confess with us his divinity demonstrated by all his works: you acknowledge with us in Jesus Christ the God who created the universe, who rules nature, and who "hath done whatever he pleased in heaven, on earth, in the sea and in all the depths."¹ It would be highly unreasonable to oppose our weak understanding to his divine word and to place more reliance on our limited and ever erring reason than on his almighty power and infinite wisdom.²

¹ Psalm v. 6.

² Hear the same language from the mouth of one of your own divines: "We confess with the holy Fathers that the manner of Christ's presence is as inaccessible to our thoughts as to our language; that is, we confess, that it is not to be fathomed by human reason, but must be believed by faith. However incredible it may appear to us that, at so immense a distance, the flesh of Jesus Christ should come down to us and become our food, it must never be forgotten how much the power of the Holy Spirit surpasses our comprehension, and how foolish it would be to think of measuring his immensity by our weak understandings. Let faith, then, admit what reason cannot conceive."*

"O God incarnate, how thou canst give us thy flesh to eat and thy blood to drink! How thy flesh is meat indeed! How thou who art in heaven, ART PRESENT ON THE ALTAR! I can by no means explain. But I FIRMLY BELIEVE IT ALL, BECAUSE THOU HAST SAID IT. I firmly rely on thy love, and on thy omnipotence to make good thy words; *though the manner of doing it, I cannot comprehend.*" †

* Cosin, Bishop of Durham, Hist. of Transubstantiation, p. 36, died in 1672, aged 77. † Bishop Ken's Exposition, licensed anno 1683. The above passage is quoted from Dr. Hawarden's True Church of Christ, Part III. p. 149,

APPENDIX.

Testimonies of the Fathers.

SAINT Ignatius,* the disciple and successor of St. Peter in the see of Antioch, speaking of certain heretics, who denied the reality of the body of Christ, says: "They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not acknowledge the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father by his goodness resuscitated." *Ep. ad Smyrn.* p. 36. *T. II. P. P. Apost. Amstelœdami*, 1724.

Justin,† in his apology to the Emperor Antoninus, expresses himself as follows: "Our prayers being finished, we embrace one another with the kiss of peace. Then to him who presides over the brethern is presented bread, and wine tempered with water; having received which, he gives glory to the Father of all things in the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and returns thanks, in many prayers, that he has been deemed worthy of these gifts. These offices being duly performed, the whole assembly, in acclamation, answers, *Amen*; when the ministers, whom we call deacons, distribute to each one present a portion of the blessed bread, and the wine and water. Some is also taken to the absent. This food we call the Eucharist, of which they alone are allowed to partake, who believe the doctrines taught by us, and have been regenerated by water for the remission of sin, and who live as Christ ordained. For we do not take these gifts as common bread and common drink; but as Jesus Christ, our Saviour, made man by the word of God, took flesh and blood for our salvation: in the same manner, we have been taught, that the food which has been blessed by the prayer of the words which he spoke, and by which our blood and flesh, in the change, are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus incarnate. The apostles, in the commentaries written by them, which are called Gospels, have delivered that Jesus so commanded, when taking bread, having given thanks, he said: *Do this in remembrance of me. This is my body.* In like manner, taking the cup, and giving thanks, he said: *This is my blood*: and that he distributed both to them only. If you find this reasonable, respect it; if you think it impertinent, despise it: but do not on that account condemn to death people who have done no evil. For we declare to you that you will not escape the judgment of God, if you persevere in this injustice. For our parts, we say: God's will be done." *Apol. I. p. 95. 96. 97. Edit. Londini*, an. 1712.

Irenæus, in his fourth book against heresies, ch. XVII. al. 32. speaks thus;

* Suffered Martyrdom in 108. † Martyred in 163.

“Jesus Christ, having taken what of its own nature was bread, blessed and gave thanks saying: *This is my body*: and, in the same manner, having taken the chalice, he confessed that it was his blood: he taught the new oblation of his Testament: the Church has received it from the apostles and offers it to God throughout the world.” You shall now read Doctor Grabe’s commentary on these words. “It is certain that Irenæus and all the Fathers whose writings we possess, whether contemporary with the apostles or their immediate successors, have held the Eucharist to be the sacrifice of the new law. Now, that this doctrine, and this practice, was not that of any particular Church or of any private divine, but that it was the doctrine, and the practice of the universal Church, which it had received from the apostles, and the apostles from Jesus Christ, is what we are taught by Irenæus in express terms, and before him by Justin the Martyr, whose testimonies, as well as those of St. Ignatius, Tertullian, St. Cyril and others, have been so often quoted, not only by the adherents of the pope, but also by the most learned protestants, that there is no need of repeating them. There would scarcely have been the least doubt that this doctrine respecting the sacrifice of the Eucharist was derived from the apostles and that it consequently claimed our faith and attachment, should there even have not been found a single word for it in the writings of the prophets or the apostles. For the precept of St. Paul* is general: Brethern, stand fast; and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistles. But a sufficient number of passages from scripture have been adduced, after Irenæus and the other Fathers, by modern divines, not only by those attached to the pope, but by protestants, and above all by the divines of the Church of England, from among whom I shall name only one, but one, eminent for learning and piety, Joseph Mede, † who in a treatise written in English, on the sacrifice of the Christian law; has proved and established this point in the clearest manner. And not only am I willingly of his opinion, but I moreover subscribe with all my heart to the wish he has expressed at the end of the eighth chapter; and since so many learned and pious persons among protestants have recognized the true doctrine of the apostolic Church and shewn their contempt for Luther and Calvin, I earnestly wish with Mede, that these sacred liturgical formularies, in which sacrifice is offered to God, and which have been unadvisedly banished from their assemblies, may be again brought into use among us, that we may render to the divine Majesty the supreme honor we owe it.

Irenæus again, in Book IV. against heresies, ch. XXXIV. thus refutes certain heretics who denied that Christ was the Son of the Creator: “How can these prove, that the bread over which the words of thanksgiving have been pronounced *is the body of their Lord*, and the cup his blood, while they do not admit that he is the Son, that is, the Word, of the Creator of the world?” Attend now to what your countryman, the celebrated Fisher, bishop of Rochester, has written upon these words: “In the first words, Irenæus affirms as most certain, that the bread and wine are the body and blood of the Lord. It appears also, that the heretics, against whom he was writing, acknowledged that they admitted the same, and that, resting upon this their acknowledgment, he reasoned against them as follows: How come you to believe, that the bread, after the thanksgiv-

* II. Thessal. ii. 14. † Professor of the Greek language at Cambridge; died in 1658.

ing, is the body of our Lord, and the chalice his blood, if at the same time you deny that your Lord is the Son of the Creator of the world, that is to say, the Word itself, by virtue of which the vine fructifies, and produces the grape; the earth, grass, corn and bread? For if the Christ, as you imagine, had an adversary in the Creator of all things, he never would have chosen, from amongst created things, "bread and wine, from which to form his body and blood."* I could here adduce two other passages from the same Irenæus;† but the great number of those I have still to produce, admonish me to proceed to another authority.

Origen,‡ explaining the words of the royal prophet, *adore his footstool*, expresses himself thus: "By footstool some suppose that we are to understand the body of Christ, because he received it from the earth, and that this body ought to be *adored*, because of Christ. Therefore now the Christ himself claims our *adoration*, because of the Word of God which is in him."||

The same Father, notwithstanding the reserve with which he spoke of the mysteries to pagans, ventures to tell Celsus, that the breads offered become by prayer a holy body. "We, who study to please the Creator of all things with prayers and giving of thanks for benefits received, eat of the breads that are offered, which by prayer are made a holy body. By this, they who partake of it with a pure spirit, are rendered more holy."§

When treating of the sacrifices of the old law, he writes as follows¶ in allusion to the sacrifice of the new law: "Attach not so much importance to the blood of animals; but rather make yourselves acquainted with the blood of the Word, and hear what he himself says: *This is my blood*. He who is imbued with the knowledge of the mysteries discerns the body and blood of the Word-God. We will not therefore dwell upon things known to the initiated, and which must be kept concealed from the uninitiated."

"When you receive the sacred and incorruptible food, when you taste the bread and the cup of life, *you eat and drink the body and blood of the Lord*: then the Lord enters under your roof. You ought therefore to humble yourself, and to exclaim with the centurion: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof." These words are still used by the Church when administering the holy Communion.

St. Cyprian** primate of Africa, at the approach of a fresh persecution, wrote thus:†† "Let us prepare ourselves for the combat, and think of nothing but how we may obtain the glory and the crown of a life eternal, by confessing the Lord. The approaching combat will be more severe and cruel than ever: by an unshaken faith must the soldiers of Christ prepare themselves, reflecting that they drink daily *the chalice of his blood*, to the end that they may be the better disposed to shed their blood for Christ....."

He severely condemns the unbecoming conduct of a Christian, who on leaving the Church went to the theatre: "Scarcely dismissed from the temple of the

* *On the Eucharist*, ch. XX. and XXI. against Ecolampadius.—† Book V. ch. II. No. 3.—‡ Born in 185, died in 258.—|| Comment. on Ps. XCVIII.—§ *Against Celsus*, Book, V. III.—¶ Hom. IX. on *Levit.*, No. 10.—** Died, 258.—†† Ep. LVI. an exhortation to martyrdom.

Lord, and bearing the Eucharist still in his bosom, the wretched man walked off to the theatre, *carrying with him the sacred body of Jesus Christ*.*

“We are to put on the breastplate of justice, that our heart may be defended against the shafts of the enemy.....Let us fortify our eyes, that they may not rest upon these detestable idols; let us fortify our mouth, that our victorious tongue may confess the Lord and his Christ; let us arm our hand with the spiritual sword, that it may intrepidly repel these fatal sacrifices; and that, at the remembrance of the Eucharist, the hand which has received the *body of the Lord*, may embrace and clasp its God, being assured of soon receiving from him the reward of a heavenly crown.”

To prepare those for martyrdom, who, having fallen in the persecution, were desirous of returning to their duty, St. Cyprian † proposes that they should be admitted to communion sooner than the laws of public penance would otherwise have allowed.

“Thus,” says he, “it is necessary to grant them the peace, that being exhorted and animated to the combat, they may be sent fortified and protected by the *body and blood of Jesus Christ*, and not naked and unarmed; for the Eucharist was instituted to be the support of those who receive it.”

“The sacrifice that we offer is the passion of our Lord.” ‡

“Who ever was with better title priest of the Most High, than our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered sacrifice to God his Father? The sacrifice that he offered, is the same as the sacrifice of Melchisedech, bread and wine, that is to say, *his body and blood*.” §

“The great honor and glory of our Episcopacy is to have given the peace (communion) to the Martyrs; and to celebrate daily as priests the sacrifice of God, to prepare for him his victims.” §

St. Dionysius ¶ archbishop of Alexandria, being unable, on account of his great age, to comply with the urgent request of the bishops, that he would attend at the council of Antioch, wrote to Paul of Samosata a letter which Eusebius has preserved, and which St. Jerom most highly commends.

In it we discover the respect entertained by this great and holy Father for the divine and incorruptible blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, which he compared to the Holy Spirit, whereas Paul pretended, that it was corruptible, because Jesus Christ had said; “Take it, and divide it among you.”——“By this *ineffable* mystery,” adds he, “which Christ calls the new Testament he gives himself to us in the mysterious supper. Formerly, the flesh of irrational animals was placed upon the altar..... now it is no longer so; but the Lord himself, the Saviour and the God of Israel, has said, He that eateth me, shall live by me..... Now if we cannot say that the Holy Ghost is corruptible, although he has descended and been distributed among many, we must reason in the same manner expecting *the life-giving blood* of Jesus Christ. And thus do we demonstrate to Paul, that the *most sacred blood* of Jesus Christ our God is not corruptible; that it is not the blood of a mortal man like ourselves, but of the true God, who is a torrent of delights to those who have the happiness to partake of it.”

“What a crime,” cries out Firmilian, ** bishop of Cæsarea, is committed by

* Book on theatrical entertainments.—† Epist. LIV.—‡ Ep. LXII. to Cecilius.—|| Ep. LIII. to Cecilius.—§ Ep. CIV.—¶ Died, 265.—** Ep. to St. Cyprian.

those who admit and those who are admitted, when they have the presumption to receive the Holy Communion, before they have declared their sins, and washed away their stains in the bath of the Church, impiously touching *the body and the blood of the Lord*, since it is written: He that shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord!"

The following testimony must be considered as belonging both to the third and fourth centuries: it is the testimony of three hundred and eighteen bishops; * or to speak more correctly, of the universal Church, because it emanates from the first general council. "We must not confine our attention to the bread and the chalice offered on the sacred table; but elevating our mind, let us discover by faith this Lamb of God lying on this sacred table, taking away the sins of the world, and immolated by the priests in an unbloody manner; and *when we truly receive his precious body and blood*, let us consider them as the pledges of our resurrection."

"Saint James, † bishop of Nisibis, who attended at the general council of Nice, speaks as follows: "Our Saviour washed the feet of his disciples....giving them thereby a noble example of humility....Having washed the feet of his disciples, he sat down again to table, and then gave them his body and blood."

"There is a door to thy house, and it is the temple of God. It would certainly be a crime, O man, to allow filth and dirt to come through the door *where thy king enters*. Beware of every impure word, and then *take the body and blood of Jesus Christ*. Guard thy mouth with circumspection, remembering that *thy king has entered therein*. Thou canst no longer be permitted, O man, to let indecent expressions escape from thy mouth." ‡

Eusebius || bishop of Emessa, and disciple of Eusebius of Cæsarea, speaks thus of the Eucharistic blood, in allusion to the passage of Exodus. They shall take the blood of the lamb, and sprinkle both the door posts:—They sprinkle the blood of the lamb upon both the posts, who receive it with both their *mouth and heart*. They who receive unworthily, or who receiving do not believe it to be the blood of Christ, sprinkle the blood upon one post only.....As for us, *receiving it with both our mouth and heart, let us be persuaded, that it is the blood of Christ*: let us place it upon both posts, by receiving it into our bodies and our souls."

Let us hear what St. Hilary says: § "If the word, *truly, was made flesh*, and we, *truly, receive this word for our food*: how can he be thought not to dwell naturally in us, who assumed the nature of our flesh inseparably united to him, and communicates, in the sacrament, that nature to us? For thus, we are all one: because the Father is in Christ, and Christ in us....We are not to speak of heavenly things as we do of human.....*Of the Natural verity of Christ in us, whatever we speak we speak foolishly and wickedly, unless we learn it of him*; for it is he that said: *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*. There is no place left to doubt of the truth of Christ's flesh and blood, for now, by the declaration of the Lord himself and according to our belief, it is truly flesh, and

* In the Acts of the Council of Nice, 325. † Died in 350, Discourse on the Pasch. No. 6. ‡ Sermon on Fasting. || Died in 359, Hom. II. on the Pasch. § Died in 367, B. VIII. on the Trinity.

truly blood. But he himself attests how we are in him by the sacramental communication of his body and blood: *And the world, says he, sees me not, but you see me, because I live and you shall live: for I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.* (John XIV. 19, 20.) If he wished the unity of will alone to be understood, why should he establish a certain order and progression in the formation of it; but that he should be in the Father, by the nature of the divinity; we in him, by his corporal birth, and he in us, by the sacramental mystery."

St. Basil * has already been cited in the liturgy which bears his name among the Greeks. We have seen that he composed various magnificent prayers for the altar, and that they were in great request in the East, and affixed to the canon in a great number of Churches.

St. Ephrem, † deacon of Edessa, whose life was written by St. Gregory of Nyssa, brother of St. Basil, expresses himself in the following remarkable manner: "Sedulously consider all these things, and believe that they are true, as they are related. For if you view them not with the eyes of faith, you cannot rise from the earth to heaven, nor in spirit behold what Christ suffered. When the eye of faith is clearly open, it contemplates, in a pure light, the lamb of God, who was immolated for us, and who gave us his body for our food to the remission of our sins. This same eye of faith manifestly beholds the Lord, eating his body and drinking his blood, and indulges no curious inquiry..... You believe that Christ, the Son of God, for you was born in the flesh. Then why do you search into what is inscrutable? Doing this, you prove your curiosity, not your faith. Believe then, and with a firm faith receive the body and blood of our Lord, *being assured that you eat the Lamb itself whole and entire.* For the mysteries of Christ are an immortal fire. Beware how you rashly attempt to fathom them, lest, whilst you are a partaker, you be consumed by them. Abraham placed earthly food before celestial spirits, (Gen. XVII.) of which they ate. This was wonderful. But what Christ has done for us greatly exceeds this, and transcends all speech, and all conception. To us, that are in the flesh; he has given *to eat his body and blood.* Myself incapable of comprehending the mysteries of God, I dare not proceed; and should I attempt it, I should shew only my rashness."

"The priesthood, raising itself boldly from earth to heaven, ascends to the throne of the Almighty, and supplicates the King of mercies, that his Holy Spirit may descend, at the same time, and sanctify the gifts offered on the earth." ‡

St. Optatus, || bishop of Milevum in Africa, reproaches the Donatists, as follows: "What is so outrageous as to break, to erase, and to remove the altars of God, on which you yourselves made offerings? On them the vows of the people and the members of Christ were borne; there the Almighty was invoked, and the Holy Spirit descended: and from them the faithful received the pledge of eternal life, the buckler of faith, and the hope of resurrection?..... For what is the altar, but the seat of the body and blood of Jesus Christ? What offence had Christ given, whose body and blood, at certain times, do there dwell?..... This enormous impiety was doubled, whilst you broke also the chalices, which

* Died in 378. † Died in 378. *De. Nat. Dei.* T. III. p. 182, *Edit. Vossii.* ‡ Discourse on the Priesthood. || Died in 380, *Contra Parmen.* L. IV. p. 91, 92, 93. Parisiis 1700.

contained the blood of Christ: *Christi sanguinis portatores*. O abominable crime? unheard of impiety? You have imitated the Jews: they pierced the body of Jesus Christ upon the cross; and you have struck him upon the altar."

St. Cyril,* of Jerusalem, has left us eighteen catechetical discourses for the instruction of the catechumens, and five others addressed to the newly-baptised: they appear to have been composed about the year 347, whilst he was yet a priest. Hear how he addressed the neophytes † when explaining the liturgy: "You have seen the deacon present to the officiating priest, and to the attendant priests, water to wash their hands..... After that, the officiating priest says aloud; Raise up your hearts; for it is at this awful moment particularly that you should raise up your hearts to God, and have them disengaged from all that is earthly... At these words of the priest you answer; We have our hearts raised up to the Lord; and by this you profess to do what he requires. The priest continues; Let us give thanks to the Lord..... You answer; It is right and just to give thanks to the Lord..... We then recite that sacred hymn which the seraphim chant in heaven in honor of the three Divine Persons, that by this celestial psalmody, we may communicate with the angelic host, and that, being more and more sanctified by these spiritual canticles, we may with greater purity entreat so good and kind a God to send down the Holy Spirit on the things that are offered, and to make *the bread become the body of Jesus Christ, and the wine his blood*. For all that receives the impression of the Holy Spirit is sanctified and *changed* into another substance. Now, when the spiritual sacrifice is ended, and this unbloody worship rendered to God by means of the host of expiation is completed, we pray for the peace of all the Churches, for the tranquillity of the world, for kings and their armies, and for their allies, for the afflicted, in a word for all, who stand in need of the Divine assistance." (Here comes the prayer for the dead, which I will introduce in another place.) "You say afterwards: Our Father, who art in heaven."

"After this, you hear the voice of the chanter, by a melodious and divine canticle, invites you to the communion of the sacred mysteries, saying these words: Taste and see how sweet is the Lord. Do you think that you are commanded to make this discovery by the mere taste of the palate? In no wise; but by the testimony of faith, which is certain and leaves no room for doubt. For, when you communicate, you are not commanded to taste the bread and wine, but to take the sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

"Now, when you approach to communicate, you must not come with your hands stretched out, or your fingers open: but your left hand supporting your right hand, which is to hold so great a king, receive the body of Jesus Christ in the hollow of that hand, saying, *Amen*. Then, having carefully sanctified your eyes by the touch of the sacred and venerable body, you will communicate by eating it. But, be very careful that nothing falls, considering the loss of the smallest particle as if you should lose a member of your body. Were you to receive ingots of gold, how anxiously would you guard them, that nothing might be lost? What precaution ought you not to take that not the smallest part be lost of that which is infinitely more precious and dear to us than gold or diamonds.

* Elected bishop in 350, died in 385. † Catech. IV. *Mystag.*

“After having thus communicated of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, approach to the chalice of the blood, not stretching out your hands, but bowing down in the attitude of homage and *adoration*, and saying: *Amen*. Then sanctify yourselves by the touch of the blood of Jesus Christ which you receive: and whilst your lips are still moistened with it, wipe them with your hand and apply it immediately to your eyes, your forehead and the various organs of your senses, to consecrate them. Then, till the priest begins the last prayer, thank God, that he has made you worthy to participate in mysteries so sublime and elevated.” *

St. Gregory, † bishop of Nyssa, brother of the celebrated St. Basil, and who, from his great age as well as from his learning, was called the Father of the Fathers, explains the change of the bread and wine in the Eucharist: “It is with reason then that I believe that the bread, being sanctified by the word of God, is *transformed and changed* into the body of the Word-God: for this bread is sanctified, as says the apostle, by the word of God and by prayer, not in such a manner, that by eating and drinking it becomes the body of the Word; but it is *changed* instantaneously into the body by the word, as the Word has said, *This is my body.*” He concludes this chapter by observing, that “it is by virtue of the benediction, that *the nature of the visible species is changed into his body: Virtute benedictionis in illud transelementata eorum quæ apparent natura.*”

He establishes in general that the sacred things are very different from what they were before the consecration: this he shews by many examples; among others, by that of the Eucharist bread, of which he speaks thus: “The bread is, at first, but common bread: but when it has been sanctified, it is called, and is *made* the body of Christ.” ‡

St. Ambrose || the illustrious bishop of Milan, shall now display in its full light the doctrine of the Church respecting the adoration of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist: “Mary adored Jesus Christ, the apostles also adored him and even the angels adored him, as it is written: Let all the angels of God adore him. Now they adore not only his divinity, but also the foot-stool under his feet, because it is holy. And if heretics deny that adoration should be paid to the mysteries of the incarnation of Jesus Christ.....they may read in the scripture, that the

* This general description of the liturgy of St. James proves the conformity of our liturgy with his. For in this we find the *Sursum corda* the *Habemus ad Dominum*, the *Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro*, the *Dignum et justum est*, the *Sanctus*, the *Pater noster*, and even the pouring of water upon the fingers of the priest; in it we find the altar, the unbloody sacrifice, the oblation of the victim, the invocation for the real presence by the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood, the prayer for the dead, the invocation of saints, and at the time of communion, the adoration. How consoling and delightful is it to find ourselves, after so many ages, still in the track of primitive and apostolical Christianity, and to feel, that we still proceed in the same order and the same worship, and that the dogmas which we profess, are precisely the same as those which, fifteen hundred years ago, were professed by the first and the most ancient of all Churches! Therefore, the unfortunate authors of this insipid reformation must have sinned equally against good taste as against faith, when, separating themselves from the saints reigning in heaven, the souls suffering in purgatory, and the first Christians on the earth, they retrenched from the liturgy all that was most moving, most sublime and most ancient. † Died about the year 400. *Catech. Disc. CXXXVII.* ‡ Discourse on the baptism of Jesus Christ. || Died in 397. B. 117, on the *Holy Spirit*, Ch. XII.

apostles also adored him, after he had risen again in a glorified body. For we must not consider this foot-stool according to the ordinary custom of man: and again we are to adore only God. It is then rather difficult to know what must be done in these circumstances; and for this reason, it will be necessary more particularly to examine what is this foot-stool of the Lord; for we read in another part: Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my foot-stool. Now, we must not adore the earth, because it is but a creature; we should, however examine whether the earth, which the prophet requires us to adore, be not that earth, with which the Lord Jesus clothed himself in his incarnation. We must therefore say, that the foot-stool is the earth, and by this earth we must understand the very flesh of Jesus Christ, *which to this day we adore in our sacred mysteries*, and which the apostles formerly adored in his person, as we have already said. For Jesus Christ is not divided, but is indivisible: and whilst they adored him as the Son of God, they did not disown him for the Son of Mary."

"Although we may be insignificant of ourselves," says this holy Archbishop elsewhere speaking of himself and the priests, "we cease not to be venerable, on account of the sacrifice which we offer; for, although it seems as if it were not Jesus Christ who now offers himself, it nevertheless is he who is offered upon the earth, every time that his body is offered, or rather it is manifest, that it is he who offers in us, because it is his word that sanctifies the sacrifice which we offer." *

"And I wish that when we incense the altars and offer up the sacrifice, the angels would assist, or rather manifest their presence; for you are not to doubt that the angels are present when Jesus Christ *is present*, and is immolated." †

"Neither Caiaphas nor Pilate had the power to deprive us of Jesus Christ, nor can we fast as if we had lost our spouse, because we have Jesus Christ; and are nourished by his flesh and blood." ‡

In his fourteenth epistle he testifies that he daily renewed the sacrifice; and in his commentary on the epistle of the Hebrews, he says: "Do we not make an offering every day? and he adds, that where this offering was not made every day, it would be necessary to make it at least twice a week.

Here I will add what is said by the Author of the books on the sacraments, because this work was for a long time attributed to St. Ambrose, is visibly formed upon the doctrine of this bishop, and cannot possibly be thrown back later than the sixth century. Attend now to his language upon the Eucharist; || "You will perhaps say: It is common bread: but this bread is bread before the words of the sacrament. After the consecration, from bread that it was, *it becomes the flesh of Jesus Christ*. This then is what we have to prove. How is it possible that this bread, which was bread, should become the body of Jesus Christ? By the consecration. But by what words is this consecration accomplished? By the words of our Lord Jesus. For, whatever other words are said, are either the praises of God, or prayers for the people, for princes, or individuals. When we come to the consecration of the adorable sacrament, then the priest no longer makes use of his own words, but of the words of Jesus Christ....But what then is the word of Christ? The same, by which all things were made. The Lord commanded, and the heavens were made: he commanded, and the earth was

* On Ps. † On St. Luke, B. I. ‡ B. V. on the Gospel, v. || B. IV. iv.

made: he commanded, and the seas were made..... If then the word of the Lord Jesus had power to give existence to what was not before, how much more will it have power to make that, which was, still exist and *pass into another substance*! The heavens were not, the sea was not, the earth was not: but hear his word: He spoke, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created. Thus, to reply to your difficulty, before consecration the body of Christ was not there; but after consecration, I tell you that it is there. He spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it was formed;" Here the author relates, like St. Ambrose, the miracles of Moses, Elias, Eliseus and of the Nativity, and concludes: "Thus you have learned, that the bread *becomes* the body of Christ: you have learned, that wine and water are mixed in the chalice, and that they *become* his blood by the consecration of the heavenly word."..... He says afterwards: "You will tell me perhaps: I see no appearance of blood..... The Lord assures us himself, that we receive his body and his blood: *ought we then to doubt* of the truth of his words, and call in question his testimony?"

St. Epiphanius,* metropolitan of Salamis in Cyprus, an ancient Church founded by St. Barnabas, a native of the Island, wishing to prove that we must reject the allegories of Origen, and believe things, although we see not the reason for believing them, adduces the example of the Eucharist: "We see," says he,† "that the Lord took a thing into his hands, as we read in the Gospel, that he rose up from table, and that he took these things, and that having given thanks he said: This is a certain thing.‡ However, we see that this thing is neither equal nor like to the image of the flesh that he has taken, any more than it is like to the divinity, which cannot be seen, or to the figure or shape of his members. Now, this thing is round, and as for sense or feeling it has none: and nevertheless, by an effect of his grace, he has been pleased to declare, that this was a certain thing, and there is *no one but believes in his words*: and he who believes not according as he himself has said, is fallen from grace and salvation."

This passage is borrowed and explained by the ancient Author of the dialogues, attributed to Cesarius,|| brother of St. Gregory Nazianzen, and physician to the Emperor Julian: "The divine word," says he, "being among us, and living with us,..... said to his apostles, when dividing the bread amongst them: Take and eat ye all of this, *It is my body*: although he had not as yet been sacrificed in his own flesh. And in like manner he said: Take and drink, *This is my blood*; although his side had not as yet been pierced with a lance on the cross. And we see every day this sacred bread, at the time of the divine and mystical liturgy, on the unbloody altar, and laid out upon the immaculate table. It in no respect resembles the image of the body of the Word-God, who is the cause of our salvation: and the chalice of the wine which is offered with the bread has no resemblance to the blood that is in his body. All this derives nothing, either from the distinction of the members of this body, or from the quality of a flesh formed with blood, or from the invisible divinity without shape or form, which is invisibly joined to it. For the body of Jesus Christ is filled with blood, composed of nerves, arteries, veins..... It is erect, possesses the various members of the hu-

* Born in 310, died in 403. † Anchorate, No. 37. ‡ He expresses himself in this manner on account of the uninitiated. The succeeding author was not under the same apprehension. || St. Cesarius, died in 368. *Dial.* III.

man body; it is able to walk and to act: but this other thing is round without distinction of members, inanimate without motion or blood; bearing no resemblance to that which is visible in Jesus Christ, or to his unseen divinity. We believe however, upon the authority of the word of God, that, although it possesses neither resemblance nor equality, *it is properly and precisely the divine body itself*, that is sacrificed on the divine table, that is divided without division among all the flock, and of which we are incessantly participating."

St. Epiphanius* tells us: "The Church is the tranquil port of peace. We experience in her bosom a sweetness which reminds us of the perfumes of the Cyprian vine: there we gather fruits filled with benediction: she still every day presents us this draught so efficacious in dissipating our afflictions—the pure and true blood of Jesus Christ."

St. Paulinus,† who wrote the life of St. Ambrose, relates the manner in which that saint received communion when at the point of death. This passage is curious, inasmuch as it shews the ancient practice of the Church of giving to the dying communion under one kind alone. "Honoratus, bishop of Vercelli (who attended him at his death) having retired to the top of the house for a little sleep and repose, heard a voice which for a third time said to him: Arise, make haste, for he will soon give up the ghost. Then, coming down, he presented to the saint the body of our Lord. He received it, and no sooner had he swallowed it (*quo accepto, ubi glutivit*), than he gave up the ghost, taking with him a good viaticum, that his soul being fortified with this food, might go to enjoy the company of the angels."‡

St. Gaudentius,|| illustrious for sanctity and learning, was travelling in the East, when he was chosen bishop of Brescia, in Italy. He composed a catechetical work§ on the Eucharist, which is not less expressed nor less excellent than that of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and of which I will here produce a few specimens. "He who is the Creator and Lord of all nations, who produces bread from the earth; *of the bread makes his own proper body*, (for he is able and he promised to do it:) and who of water made wine, *and of wine, his blood*. O, the depth of the riches, of the knowledge and wisdom of God! (Rom. xi. 33.) It is the pasch, he says, that is, the passover of the Lord. Think not that earthly, which is made heavenly by him, who passes into it, *and has made it his body and blood*.... You will consume by your faith, whatever may remain of the Lamb; i. e. whatever in these mysteries at present surpasses our comprehension, but which at the day of resurrection shall be made manifest: *For, now*, says the apostle, *I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known*. All this must be consumed by fire, i. e. abandoned to the divine Spirit, that whatever we cannot at present account for, may be consumed by the spirit of an ardent faith.... Believe then what is announced to thee; because what thou receivest, *is* the body of that celestial bread, and the blood of that sacred vine: for when he delivered consecrated bread and wine to his disciples, he said: *This is my body; this is my blood*. Let us believe him whose faith we profess, for truth cannot lie. Let us not break these solid and firm bones: *This is my body; this is my blood*. And what remains

* Exposition of the faith. † About 402. ‡ *Life of St. Ambrose*, dedicated to St. Augustine, by Paulinus, the deacon. || Elected bishop in 303. § Tract. 11: in *cod. Bibl. P. P. T. V.* p. 946, 947. Edit. Lugduni, 1677.

in the mind of any one, which he does not conceive by this exposition, let it be consumed by the ardor of his faith."

St. Chrysostom,* who may with good reason be considered as specially raised up by God to establish the truth and display the sanctity of the Eucharist, furnishes us with many more passages than our limits will allow of: a few will serve our purpose here. "In what sense does Jesus Christ say: *The flesh profiteth nothing?* He says it not of his flesh: God forbid: but of those who understand his word carnally. Now, what is it to understand his word carnally. It is to confine our view merely to the things proposed, and to look no farther: for that is understanding them carnally. Now, we must not judge of mysteries by what we see of them: but we must consider them all with the eyes of the mind." †

"It is necessary, ‡ my dear brethern, to learn what is the miracle wrought in our mysteries, why it has been given to us, and what profit we ought to derive from it. We are all but one body, the members of his flesh and bones. Let us who are initiated follow what I am about to say. In order then that we may be mixed up with the flesh of Jesus Christ, not only by love, but really and truly, he has given the food that effects this *prodigy*, being desirous thus to manifest the love he bears us. For this purpose he has *mixed and incorporated himself* in us, in order that we might form but one with him, in the same manner as the members form but one body, being all united to the same head. In fact those who love tenderly, always wish to be but one with the object of their love.... Wherefore, like lions which inhale and breathe forth flames, let us leave this table, having ourselves become formidable to the devil, reflecting on our head, and the love he has so wonderfully, and manifestly shewn us. Mothers not unfrequently put out their children to be nursed by strangers, but I, says he, feed my children with my own flesh: I myself am their food: for it is my desire to ennoble you all, and give you an earnest of future blessings. Giving myself to you, as I do, in this world, I shall be able, with much more reason, to treat you still better in the other. I wish to become your brother; for you I have taken flesh and blood; and *now moreover* I give you this flesh and blood, by which I am become of the same nature with yourselves. This blood produces in us a brilliant and royal image: it prevents the nobleness of the soul from suffering injury, when it frequently sprinkles and nourishes it.... This blood is spread through the soul, as soon as drunk; it waters and fortifies it. This blood, when worthily received, puts the devils to flight: it invites and introduces to us the angels and the Lord of the angels.... This blood, being shed, washed and purified the world.... And if, in the capital of Egypt, the symbol of this blood, being merely sprinkled upon the door-posts, possessed such virtue and efficacy, the truth and reality is infinitely more powerful and efficacious.... If death so much feared the figure and the shadow, how much, let me ask you, will it not fear the reality?..... Thus every time we partake of this body and taste this blood, let us think that he who sitteth in heaven, and whom the angels adore, is the self-same whom we taste and receive here below."

"But what! Do you not see these vessels, upon the altar, of dazzling bright-

* Preacher at Antioch in 386, patriarch of Constantinople in 398, banished into Armenia, Nov. 14th, 407.—† Hom. XLVII. on St. John.—‡ Hom. LXI. to the people of Antioch. Hom. XLV. on St. John, very nearly the same.

ness and purity? Our souls ought to be still more resplendent with purity and sanctity. And why so? Because if these vessels are so well polished, it is on our account: they can neither taste nor feel him whom they *contain*, but we *most certainly*.....”

“Consider, O man! the royal table is laid out, the angels attend: the King himself is present; and thou remainest in a stupid indifference! Thy garments are soiled, and thou carest not? But they are clean, thou wilt say to me. Well, then, *adore* and communicate.” How says your Church of England! Communicate, but take care that you *adore not*.

“Joseph said of old to Pharaoh’s cup-bearer: The king shall permit thee again to present him the cup. But I do not say, that you will present the cup to the King of heaven: I tell you that the *King of heaven himself* will give you a drink, which has a wonderful virtue, and surpasses by its excellence all corporeal and spiritual creatures. They who are initiated in the divine mysteries, know what is the virtue of the sacred chalice; and you also may know it in a little time.”* And why not immediately? If this drink, possessing so wonderful a power, is nothing but a sign and a figure, why do you not announce it immediately, O Chrysostom? Why do you fear the uninitiated, and wherefore this concealment?”

“If there is no one who would receive the king without paying him due respect; nay, if there is no one who would not hesitate to touch even his garments, with dirty hands, although alone and unobserved, and though the robes are but the work of worms..... how shall we dare to receive with so much irreverence the body of God, who is above all things; that pure and spotless body, that body united to the divine nature, that body by which we are and live, that body which has broken the gates of death, and opened the vaults of heaven.” †

On those words of the apostle: *Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of this bread*, he says: ‡ “The initiated know to what this refers, they understand what is this bread and what this chalice. He that eateth and drinketh of them unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. We have already discussed this precept and explained the sense of the words.”

On the words of St. John: *And there came forth blood and water*: “It is not without a reason or from chance that these two streams flowed from the side of our Saviour, for from them the Church was formed. The initiated, who have been regenerated by water and are nourished by this flesh and blood, understand well my meaning. From this happy and fruitful source are derived our mysteries and our sacraments, in order that, when you shall approach to our awful cup, you may so come as if you were going to drink from this sacred side.” ‖

“O wonderful goodness of our God! He, who is seated at the right hand of his Father, permits himself to be touched by our hands, and gives himself to those who wish to receive and embrace him?” §

“Elias left behind him his mantle to his disciple, but in so doing he deprived himself of it. The Son of God has left us his flesh, but in leaving it to us, he is not deprived of it, but together with it raises himself up to heaven.” ¶

* Discourse to the postulants for baptism. † *Hom. XXIV. on the 1st. Ep. to the Cor.*
 ‡ *Hom.* that applause is not to be sought for in preaching. ‖ *Hom. LXXXV. on St. John.* § *In B. III. on the Priesthood* ¶ *Hom. II. to the people of Antioch.*

“This sacred table represents the crib: for here also the body of the Lord is laid, not, as then, wrapped up in swaddling-clothes, but surrounded on all sides with the Holy Spirit. The Magi only adored him: but you, if you approach with a pure conscience, are permitted to receive and take him away with you.”*

“Jesus Christ has given us his body to take and eat, and this is the last proof of his love..... Let us approach to him therefore, with fervor and an ardent charity..... This body, lying in a stable, was adored by the wise-men..... They came from a far country, and adored him with great fear and trembling..... It is not now in the stable, but on the altar, that we see him. Let us then shew him a veneration much above that of these Gentiles. †

“Go then to Bethlchem, to the house of spiritual bread..... yet so, however, that you approach to adore and not to trample under foot the Son of God..... Beware how you imitate Herod and say with him; that I also may adore him; and thus approach only to put him to death. They resemble Herod, who unworthily partake of the mysteries. For the unworthy receiver will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord..... For this reason it is that we tremble, lest whilst we appear as supplicants and adorers, we should be quite the opposite in our conduct.” ‡

John, || bishop and successor of St. Cyril in the see of Jerusalem, expresses himself thus in his sermon on the Eucharist: “O man! what are you doing? When the priest said: Raise up your hearts on high, did you not promise to do so by replying: We have them raised up to the Lord? And yet you are not ashamed to break your word..... This table is spread with mysteries: on it the Lamb of God is immolated in your behalf. The priest officiates with an ardent zeal for your salvation..... Behold the spiritual fire descending from heaven. Behold in the chalice the same blood which was drawn from the pure and divine side of Jesus Christ, in order to purify you..... Do you think that you still see bread? and that you still see wine?..... God forbid you should think any such thing?..... When you approach to communicate, think not that you receive this divine body from the hand of man, but consider it as the divine flame, which was seen by Isaias, which you receive from the seraphim themselves..... Represent to yourselves this salutary blood as flowing still from the pure and divine side of Jesus Christ; and approaching with this idea, receive it with a pure mouth.... Remain with trembling and reverence, your eyes cast down, your soul elevated.....” Sentiments and attitude of adoration.

St. Maruthas, metropolitan of Tagrit, § in Mesopotamia, the contemporary and friend of St. Chrysostom, who had composed a commentary on the Gospel, of which there remains an extract in a Syriac copy written in the year 851, and which M. Assemani has given us in Latin, ¶ attaches this sense to the words; *Do this in remembrance of me.* “This command was necessary and very proper: for, if the perpetual participation of the sacraments had not been ordained, whence could we have learned salvation through Christ; or by whose persuasion have been led to the knowledge of so great a mystery? To the bulk of mankind it would have been most difficult to be believed; and thus they would have been

* Discourse on St. Philogonius. † Hom. XXIV. on I. Cor. ‡ Hom. VII. on St. Mattheu. || Chosen Bishop in 386. Died in 416. § About 412. ¶ Bib. Orienta T. I. p. 179, Romæ, 1731.

deprived of the communion of the body and blood of Christ. But now, as often as we approach, and receive on our hands the body and blood, we believe, that we embrace his body, and become, as it is written, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones. *For Christ did not call it the figure or species of his body, but he said: THIS TRULY, IS MY BODY; AND THIS IS MY BLOOD.*"

St. Jerome,* in his commentary on St. Matthew, says: "After the typical passover was accomplished, and Christ had eaten the lamb with his apostles, he takes the bread, which comforts the heart of man, and passes to the true sacrament of the passover; that as Melchisedech, priest of the high God, in prefiguring him, had done, offering bread and wine, Christ also should make present the truth of his body and blood." And in another part of his works: † "There is as much difference between the loaves offered to God in the old law, and the body of Jesus Christ, as betwixt the shadow and the body, betwixt the image and the truth, and betwixt the types and the things they represent,"

"But, as for us, let us acknowledge, that the bread which our Saviour broke, and gave to his disciples, is the body of our Lord, he saying to them: *Take and eat, this is my body*, and of the cup: *Drink ye all of this: this is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many*:—If then the bread that came down from heaven is the Lord's body, and if the wine which he gave to his disciples, is his blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins, let us reject these Jewish fables—and receive at his hand the cup of the new covenant. Moses gave us not the true bread, but our Lord Jesus did. He invites us to the feast, and is himself our meat: he eats with us, and we eat him. We drink his blood, and without him we cannot drink." ‡

"God forbid, that I should say anything amiss of these men (priests) who, succeeding the apostles in their ministry, make the body of Jesus Christ by their sacred mouth." ||

"And elsewhere he calls the priest a Mediator between God and man, who produces the body of Jesus Christ by his sacred mouth."

St. Augustin, § bishop of Hippo in Africa, where religion being announced later had made less progress, and where even in his time a considerable proportion of the people were still involved in the darkness of paganism, frequently found himself obliged, in pursuance of the discipline of secrecy, to speak with caution and a studied obscurity on the dogmas of the Eucharist in the treatises and popular discourses, to which all sorts of persons were led from curiosity to hear him. You shall however be enabled to judge from the passages about to be adduced, that he did not express himself less clearly than the other Fathers, when he found himself emancipated from the fear of compromising the secrecy of the mysteries. ¶

* Born in 340, died in 420. Comment in Matth. C. 26. T. III. p. 716, Parisiis, 1609.

† Comment in Ep. ad. Tit. C. I. T. 3. p. 1045. ‡ Ep. CL. ad. Hedib. T. I. p. 1219.

|| Ep. I. ad. Heliod. T. I. p. 5. § Born in 354, died in 430.

¶ "The sacramentarians," wrote Luther a little before his death, "consider St. Augustin as their protector, because he frequently uses the words sacrament, mystery, invisible, sign. In my opinion, the Church has not had since the Apostle's time, a more excellent Doctor than St. Augustin: but this holy and venerable Doctor is so shamefully distorted by the sacramentarians, that he is brought forward by them as the guarantee and patron of a heresy full of venom and blasphemies. For

“We receive, with faithful heart and mouth, the Mediator of God and man, the Man Christ Jesus: who has given us his body to eat and his blood to drink: although it may appear more horrible to eat the flesh of a man than to destroy it, and to drink human blood than to spill it.*

“*Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire*, said the psalmist to God. For the ancients, when as yet the true sacrifice was foretold in figures, celebrated the type of what was to come..... Those sacrifices, therefore, signifying promises, were annulled. And what was given to complete these promises? That body, which you know; which all do not know; and which, it were to be wished, some did not know to their condemnation. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire*, said Jesus Christ. Are we, then, without a sacrifice? God forbid. *But thou hast fitted a body for me*. Thou hast rejected these sacrifices, in order to form this body: and until it was formed, it was thy will that these should be offered. The accomplishment of what was promised did away with the promises. For if these promises were still subsisting, it would be a sign that they were not accomplished. This body was promised by certain signs: but when the promised truth came, the signs were taken away. In this body we subsist: of this body we are made partakers.”†

“The blood of Jesus Christ being upon the earth, has a strong and powerful voice, when all nations, after having received, answer *Amen*, it is so. This is the loud voice of the blood, which the blood itself produces in the mouth of the faithful, who have been redeemed by it.” And in the same book the Eucharist is called “the sacrament of hope, which unites the members of the Church, whilst they *continue to drink what has flowed from the side of Jesus Christ*.‡

“We must entertain no doubt, that by the prayers of the Church and the salutary sacrifice, the dead are succored. It is what the universal Church observes, according to the tradition she has received from the Father; she prays for those who died in the communion of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and makes a particular commemoration of them in the sacrifice, she even declares, that it is offered for them. There is not a doubt that the deceased derive advantage from it, but those only who before death lived in such a manner as to be able, after death, to derive advantage from it.”||

my part, to the utmost of my power, and so long as God shall spare my life, I will resist it, and will protest that he suffers from their misrepresentations.” Indeed, there are passages of his so express and irrefragable, that they have forced this acknowledgment from Zuinglius: “Though St. Augustin speaks in another manner on this subject, still however, in two places he seems clearly to express what he understands by the word body..... We are easily inclined to believe that St. Augustin, who was a man of talent and of quick penetration above others, dared not, in his time, explicitly declare the truth, which had for the most part outstepped its boundary. Being extremely pious, he perceived what this sacrament was, and for what end it was instituted: but the opinion of the corporal presence had already gained the upperhand.” Whence at least it follows, from the confession of Zuinglius, that what we believe respecting the Eucharist, was believed in the Church these fourteen centuries ago, that is, three centuries after the apostles, and in the golden age of Christianity.

* *Contra Advers. Legis*, L. II. ix. T. vi. p. 264. Parisiis, 1614. † *In Psal.* p. 142, 143. ‡ *Contra Faustum* L. XII. x. || *Serm. CLXXII. de Verbis Dom.*

“It appears most clearly, that the disciples, the first time they *received the body and blood of the Lord*, did not receive them fasting. But must we on that account slander the Church, because we now *receive them* only when fasting? It has pleased the Holy Spirit, from respect to so great a sacrament, that *the body of the Lord should enter into the mouth* of the Christian before every other nourishment, and for this reason has the custom prevailed throughout the world.”*

And on these words of the title of Psalm XXXIII, *he was carried in his own hands*, the holy doctor delivers himself as follows: † “But how can this happen to a man? and who could conceive it my brethren? For, what is man, that he should bear himself in his own hands? Any man may be borne in the hands of another: but no one in his own. We see not how this can be understood of David *in the literal sense; but of Jesus Christ, without difficulty*. For he was borne in his own hands, when presenting his own body, he said, *This is my body*; for then he bore his body in his hands.” It is impossible for any man to do what Jesus Christ then did. Now, any man may bear himself in figure and representation: therefore it was not in this manner that the learned bishop of Hippo understood Jesus Christ to have borne himself.

He again touches upon the same subject in another discourse on the same psalm: ‡ “How was he borne in his hands? Because when *he gave his own body and blood*; he took into his hands *what the faithful know*; and he bore himself in a certain manner, saying, *This is my body*.” St. Augustin, here adds *in a certain manner*, to remove the idea of a body being borne in the ordinary manner, and to determine the vague sense of the word *to bear* to that particular manner which can be conceived only of the body of Jesus Christ, and of the incomprehensible state in which he is in this sacrament: he adds it on account also of the uninitiated, in whose presence he avoided naming the bread.

But here is a passage || which I entreat you to consider attentively. The illustrious bishop, having to explain those words of David: *adore his foot-stool*; asks himself: But how can the earth be adored, when the scripture positively tells us: *Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God alone*? And yet, behold, it tells us here: Adore his foot-stool? But God, informing me what is his foot-stool, says: The earth is my foot-stool. (Isaias c. LXVI. v. 1.) I am in hesitation and uncertainty: I am afraid of adoring the earth, and of finding myself condemned by him who created heaven and earth. On the other hand, I am afraid, if I do not adore the foot-stool of my God, because the prophet tells me: *Adore his foot-stool*. In this perplexing uncertainty I turn towards Christ, because it is he whom I am here in quest of, and I discover in what way the earth *is adored* without impiety, and how *his foot-stool is adored* without impiety. For Jesus Christ has taken earth from the earth, for flesh comes from the earth, and he has taken his flesh from the flesh of Mary. And because he lived in the world with this flesh, and *has given us this same flesh to eat* for our salvation, *no one eating this flesh without first having adored it*, we find by this how the foot-stool of the Lord comes to be adored, and that we not only are free from sin in adoring it, but that *we should sin if we adored it not*. But is it the flesh that giveth life? The Lord himself, in exalting this our earth, tells us it is the spirit that giveth life, and

* B. II. vi. on *Januarius's Questions*. † Sermon I. on Ps. XXXIII. ‡ Sermon II. on Ps. XXXIII. || On Ps. XCVIII.

that the flesh profiteth nothing. Wherefore, whatever earth you bow or prostrate before (he means, whatever part you receive of this sacred body) regard it not as the earth: but understand the Holy one, whose foot-stool the earth is, which you *adore*. For it is on his account that you *adore* it." This text alone brings us completely acquainted with the doctrine of St. Augustin, teaching us to adore Jesus Christ in the Eucharist: it also gives us to see the doctrine of the universal Church, by bearing testimony to the practice generally observed, "no one eating this flesh, without having first adored it." Now adoration supposes the real presence.

St. Isidore of Pelusium,* one of the most illustrious disciples of St. John Chrysostom, and who, flourishing at the epoch of the general council of Ephesus, corresponded with St. Cyril of Alexandria, writing against Macedonius, expresses himself as follows;† "Since in the invocation of the sacred baptism, together with the Father and the Son, the Holy Ghost is invoked as delivering from sins; since on the mysterious table, it is he who *from common bread produces the very body of Jesus Christ incarnate*: whence comes it, O foolish man,..... that thou teachest that the Holy Spirit was made or created, and that he is not of an independent nature, operating by himself and *consubstantial* with the kingly and divine essence of the Father and the Son?"

St. Cyril ‡ patriarch of Alexandria, has, of all the Fathers, explained most at large the words of Jesus Christ in the sixth chapter of St. John, and has most frequently established the belief of the Church on the dogmas of the Eucharist, in simple didactic discourses, in plain argumentation, in a clear style, without impetuosity or the sallies of eloquence, and more as an interpreter than as an orator. Now, not only did he establish the real presence when explaining the Gospel; he confirmed it still more when combating the heresy of Nestorius, who, attacking the mystery of the incarnation, fell foul of course upon that of the Eucharist. "For if the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ, as Nestorius would have it, are not personally united together, the body and blood which are present to us in the sacrifice of the Church are but the body and blood of an ordinary man, and consequently we receive nothing more than the simple and naked humanity, and not the divinity of Jesus Christ. For the divinity being separate and distinct, can be neither taken nor eaten, unless it be by adjunction, and in as much as it is personally united with a perceptible object, which serves it as a vehicle: and the humanity, being also separate and distinct, cannot vivify the body and soul unless by adjunction, and in as much as it is united with the divinity of Christ..... Whence it follows that Nestorius, by separating the two natures of Christ, deprived the Eucharist of the power of vivifying."||

St. Cyril commenced by assembling a Synod, in which Nestorius was condemned: he afterwards presided, as legate of pope Celestine, over the third general council of Ephesus, which adopted the letter he had written to Nestorius. We will cite the two councils first, that we may learn the generally received doctrine of the Church.

The Synod held at Alexandria decided that "we do not believe that the body and blood, which are offered to us, are the body and blood of a mere man like

* Died in 440. † Ep. CIX. against *Macedonius*. ‡ Elected in 412, died in 444.

|| Treatise on the Eucharist.

ourselves; but we receive them as having been *made* the body and blood of the Word, which vivifies all things. For a mere common flesh is incapable of giving life, according to what our Saviour himself says: The flesh profiteth nothing, it is the spirit that giveth life."*

The general council of Ephesus approved and adopted the letter written by St. Cyril to Nestorius in which are found these words: "So likewise do we approach the mysterious and blessed things, and are sanctified, becoming participators in the sacred body and precious blood of Christ, the Redeemer of us all; not by receiving common flesh, which God forbid, nor even the flesh of a sanctified man..... *but a flesh become properly the flesh of the Word himself.*" Nestorius allowed with the Catholics, that in the Eucharist, the flesh of Jesus Christ was really eaten with the mouth, that is according to Nestorius, the flesh of a sanctified man, and according to the council and St. Cyril, the flesh become the body of the Word himself, or of the Man-God.

"If Jesus Christ," says St. Cyril † "is but a mere man, how can he be said to give eternal life to those who approach this table? and how shall he be divided both here and in all places without diminution?..... Let us take the body of life, itself, which for our sakes has already inhabited our body; let us drink the sanctifying blood of life, believing with firm faith that Christ is at once the priest and the victim, he who offers and who is offered, he who receives and who is given."

"In order that we may be brought into unity both with God and with one another, although separated in soul and body by the distinction which exist between us, the only Son of God has discovered a means, which is an invention and an expedient of his Father's. For uniting in the mysterious communion all the faithful by one body, *which is his own*, he makes it one and the same body with theirs. Indeed, who would be able to divide and separate from the natural union existing among them, those who are connected in unity with Jesus Christ by this one body? If then we all participate in one and the same bread, we all form but one body, because Jesus Christ cannot be divided. For this reason the Church is called the body of Jesus Christ, and we its members, according to St. Paul, for we are all united to Jesus Christ by his sacred body, receiving into our own bodies this one and indivisible body; by which it happens that our members belong to him more than to ourselves." ‡

And in the twelfth book, explaining that part of the Gospel where it is said, that the soldiers divided the garments of Jesus Christ into four parts, but that his tunic they did not divide, he says "that the four parts of the world have obtained by lot, and that they possess, without division, the sacred robe of the Word, that is, his body: because the only Son, although divided in each individual Christian, and sanctifying the soul and body of each by his own flesh, is nevertheless entire and undivided in all, being one every where, because, as St. Paul says, he cannot be divided."

"The Jews strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? This *how* is quite a Jewish difficulty, and will be the cause of the severest punishment: for they will justly be reputed guilty of grievous crimes.

* Nestorius admitted the presence of Jesus Christ as man, but not as God. † Discourse on the mysterious supper. ‡ Commentary on St. John.

who dare to attack by their incredulity the excellent and supreme Creator of all things, and who have the audacity to put the question *how*, respecting what he chooses to operate..... The rude and indocile mind rejects as an extravagance whatever surpasses its comprehension, because it does surpass it; its ignorant temerity leads it to the extremity of pride. We shall see that the Jews fell into this excess, if we consider the nature of the case. They ought without hesitation to have received the words of our Saviour, whose divine virtue and invincible power over nature, which he had on many occasions displayed before their eyes, they had so often admired..... And yet, behold, they put the mad interrogation, *how*, to God, as if ignorant that the word contained a blasphemy, since in God resides the power to do all things without difficulty..... But if thou persistest, O Jew, in putting this *how*, I in my turn will ask of thee, how the rod of Moses was *changed* into a serpent? How the waters were *changed* into blood?..... It would be more becoming, therefore, to believe in Christ and to give credence to his words; much more becoming to procure and pay eulogies to him, than rashly and inconsiderately to exclaim, How can this man give us his flesh to eat.... For our parts, in receiving the divine mysteries, let us have a faith free from all curiosity: this is our duty, and we should never again put the question *how* to the words that are said."* I cannot sufficiently exhort the children of the reformation, of whatever communion, to reflect upon this passage, and to examine thoroughly into the doctrine it so clearly teaches.

St. Proclus, disciple of St. John Chrysostom, and one of his successors in the see of Constantinople, † had the glory of converting the illustrious Roman Volusianus, who had opposed St. Augustin himself, and who declared ever after his baptism, that, if Rome had possessed three such men as Proclus, the very name of paganism would have been extinguished. He had moreover the honor, after the magnificent panegyric he had pronounced on St. Chrysostom, of obtaining from the emperor Theodosius the younger, at his and the people's united request, that the venerable body of this illustrious archbishop should be translated to Constantinople, where it was received with extraordinary pomp, thirty-five years after his death in Armenia. Of the books that Proclus composed, there remains but one short piece on the *Tradition of the Divine Liturgy*, in which are found these words: "By these prayers (of the Liturgy) the descent of the Holy Spirit was expected, that, by his sacred presence, *he would make the bread, that is presented for the offering, the body of Christ, and the wine, mingled with water, his blood.*" In Bibl. P. P. Max. T. VI. p. 618.

St. Peter, archbishop of Ravenna, ‡ surnamed Chrysologus for his golden eloquence, expresses himself as follows: || "Let the Christians, who touch every day the very body of Jesus Christ, learn by this example (of the women laboring under a flux of blood) what remedy is there to be found for their maladies, since this women was perfectly cured by merely touching the hem of his garment. But it is indeed deplorable that, whereas she found in this hem the cure of her complaint, we find, on the contrary, fresh disorders in the remedy itself. Of this the apostles warns those who touch the body of the Lord unworthily, telling them, that they receive their own damnation." This example has been brought

* B. IV. on St. John, vi. † Elected in 434, died in 446. ‡ Elected in 433, died in 450. || Discourse XXXIV.

forward in the same manner by other more ancient Fathers, and amongst others by St. Dionysius, patriarch of Alexandria, and St. John Chrysostom.

“We read in the Gospel, that a pharisee invited the Lord to eat with him. But wherefore, O pharisee, do you wish to eat with Jesus Christ? Believe in him, be a Christian, and *you shall eat him himself*. I am, said the Saviour, the bread that is come down from heaven. God always gives more than we ask of him: for he gives himself to be eaten by him who wished only for the honor of eating with him: and yet, in granting him this more extraordinary favor, which he did not expect, he did not deny him a less, which he did petition for. Did he not also of his own accord make the same promise to his disciples, when he said: You who have always remained with me till now, shall eat and drink at my table in my kingdom? Christian, consider now, whether he who has given himself to be eaten by you during this life, will, in the other, be able to refuse you any of the good things he possesses.”*

St. Leo, † so deservedly surnamed the Great, for the splendor with which he has illustrated the Church by the talents and vigor which he displayed against the heresy of Eutyches, condemned at Chalcedon, expresses himself thus upon the Eucharist, of which he was speaking indirectly in one of his sermons: “The Lord having said: Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you: communicate therefore at the sacred table, in such a manner that you entertain *no doubt whatever as to the truth of the body and blood of Jesus Christ*: for we there receive by the mouth what is believed by faith: and vainly do we reply, *Amen* (it is true) *if any doubt is entertained as to what is received.*” ‡

Theodoret, || disciple of St. Chrysostom, and who, from the confession of the centuriators of Magdeburg, seems to have established transubstantiation, has often, as he himself declares in his Dialogues, studiously selected obscure expressions, in order that the truth might remain veiled in his writings, which might fall into the hands of unbelievers. And yet, in a passage which from its obscurity appears favorable to the sacramentarians, he fails not to insert a decisive word which of itself expresses the whole Catholic doctrine to the satisfaction of every sincere seeker of truth. For, speaking of the mysterious symbols, or signs, which after consecration are still visible and palpable, he adds: § “Nevertheless they are, from that time, conceived to be what they have been made; they are believed as such, and are adored as being the things that they are believed to be.”

Theodoret was not always restrained by the same apprehension, as you may judge from the following passages: “The apostle reminds the Corinthians of that sacred night when the Lord, closing the typical pasch, displayed the true original of this figure, opened the portals of the salutary sacrament, and gave his precious body and blood not only to the eleven apostles, but to Judas himself.” And again on these words: *He that shall eat this bread, or drink this chalice unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of Jesus Christ*: “Here the apostle strikes at the ambitious: he strikes also at us, who, with a bad conscience, dare receive the divine sacraments. This sentence, *shall be guilty of the body and blood*, signifies, that as Judas betrayed and the Jews insulted him, so do they treat him with

* Sermon XCV. † Chosen pope in 440, died in 451. ‡ Discourse VI. on the fast of the seventh month. || Bishop in 431, died very old 470. § Dial. 11.

ignominy who receive into impure hands his most holy body, and introduce it into an unclean mouth."*

Judge again of his doctrine from the following fact, recorded by him: † "The Emperor Theodosius being arrived at Milan, after the slaughter committed by his order at Thessalonica, and wishing to enter the Church as he had been accustomed, St. Ambrose went out to prevent him; and meeting him at the outside of the great porch, he forbade him to enter, using nearly the following words: With what eyes, O Emperor, can you behold the temple of Him, who is our common master? With what feet will you dare tread upon the ground so holy? How will you presume to stretch forth your hands towards God, while they are yet reeking with blood unjustly shed? How will you dare touch *the most holy body* of the Saviour of the world with those same hands, that have been stained with the carnage at Thessalonica? And how will you dare *receive that precious blood into your mouth*, after it has, in the fury of your passion, pronounced the unjust and cruel words, which have caused the blood of so many innocent persons to be spilt? Retire then, and beware how you attempt to add crime to crime! Permit yourself rather to be bound in the manner that is ordained in heaven by that God, who is the master of kings and people; and respect that sacred bond which is able to heal your soul of this mortal wound, and restore it to health. — The Emperor, moved by these words, returned to the imperial palace, weeping and groaning; and a long time afterwards, that is, at the end of eight months, the divine Ambrose absolved him from his sin."

Hesychius, ‡ on the authority of Theophanes in his Chronological History was celebrated for his learning, in the time of St. Cyril of Alexandria. He was priest at Jerusalem. In his Commentary on Leviticus, we read: || "God ordained in the old law, that what remained of the flesh and the bread of the sacrifices, should be burnt. This we see with our own eyes now accomplished in the Church, where what remains after the celebration of the mysteries of the communion of the faithful, is burnt in the fire. Thus this sensible action represents something spiritual and intelligible to those who are careful to remark it: viz: that when we find ourselves incapable of eating the sacrifice entirely, our mind becoming weak and faint, and *doubting* whether what is seen should be believed to be the body of the Lord, which the angels themselves, cannot behold, then we must not remain in *this doubt* but burn it in the fire of the spirit, that it may eat and consume what our weakness is not able to eat and consume. And how shall the fire of the spirit consume it within us, unless by our considering that the things *which to us appear impossible, are yet very possible by virtue of the Holy Spirit?*"

"The mysteries of Jesus Christ are properly the *Holy of Holies*, § because it is the body of him, concerning whom the angel Gabriel said to the virgin: *The Holy One that shall be borne of you shall be called the Son of God.* And that man knows not what he receives, who knows not its power and dignity, and *that it is truly this same body and blood.....* The Spirit of God within us, and the word that he has left us, regulate the use of our senses, and prevent not only our taste, but also our hearing, our sight, our touch, and our smell from taking more upon them than is becoming in this mystery: so that they lead us not to form any vul-

* On 1 Cor. xi. † Eccles. Hist. B. V. xvii. ‡ He flourished at Jerusalem from 440 to 470. || B. II. viii. § Hesychius, book VI. ch. xii.

gar notion or feeble reasoning unworthy of things so elevated and sublime.... For the sanctification of the mystic sacrifice and the *change and transformation of the sensible into spiritual things*, must be attributed to him who is the true priest, Jesus Christ; that is, we must consider him as the sole author of this miracle because his power and the word pronounced by him sanctify the visible things to such a degree, that they are raised far above the reach of our senses."

Salvian,* bishop of Marseilles, of whom Gennadius has said that he might without jealousy be called the master of bishops, expresses himself as follows in his book to the Catholic Church: "If any one asks why God requires more from Christians by the Gospel than he did of old from the Jews by the old law, the reason is easily given. For if we now pay more homage and service to God, it is because we are more indebted to him. The Jews had but the shadow: we enjoy the reality. They were slaves: we are adopted children. They were covered with malediction: we are loaded with graces. They received the letter which gave death: we have received the Spirit which giveth life. To them was sent a servant for a master: and to instruct us, the Son of God himself has been sent. They passed through the Red Sea, to enter into a desert: and we have only to pass through the water of baptism to enter a kingdom. They ate manna; and we eat *Jesus Christ*. They were fed with the flesh of birds; and we are fed with the body of a God. They received the dew of heaven; and we receive the God of heaven."

St. Casarius, bishop of Arles,† bears testimony to the conformity of the doctrine of the Gallican Church with that of the Universal Church: "Because there was nothing in us, which could make us live, and nothing in God, which could make him die, he took his body from our mortal nature, in order that joining it to his immortal nature, life might die to make the dead live again. And as he was to deprive us of the sight of this body, which he had assumed, by raising it into heaven, it became necessary that he should consecrate on this day the sacrament of his body and blood, to the end that this same body, which he had once offered as the price of our salvation, should receive from us continual worship in this mystery; that the effects of our redemption operating unceasingly for the salvation of men, in the series of ages *the sacrifice* of the same redemption should also be unceasingly offered in this holy Church, and that thus this *victim of salvation*, which ought to live eternally in our memory, should be continually present to us by the operation of his grace, in such manner that there shall remain but one perfect *host*, of which we are to judge *by faith and not by the senses*, and which cannot be seen by corporeal and exterior eyes, but only by those which are interior and spiritual. Now, it is of it that our Saviour speaks, when he says with divine authority, that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. For this reason there should no longer remain in us *the least doubt of incredulity*; because the author of this heavenly gift himself bears testimony to the truth and reality of the gift. For it is this invisible priest, who by the secret virtue of his divine word *changes visible creatures into the substance of his body and blood*, saying: Take and eat, *this is my body*: and then, repeating the same sanctifying word: Take and drink, *this is my blood*. As then by a sim-

* He flourished from about 490 to 500. † Chosen in 501, died in 542, Hom. VII. on the Pasch.

ple word, God, in an instant formed from nothing the height of heaven, the depth of the seas, and the extent of the earth, in like manner, in the spiritual sacraments, by a power nothing inferior, the virtue of his word is immediately followed by the effect.

“ You see how estimable and salutary are the blessing which the power of the benediction produces on this occasion: but in order that this *change of the terrestrial and perishable substances of bread and wine into the very substance of Jesus Christ*, may not appear to you something new and impossible, you who have already found a second birth in Jesus Christ, interrogate yourselves..... No one ought to *doubt* that, by the sovereign order of God, and the presence of his Majesty, *the bread and wine can be changed* into the nature of the body of the Lord, because we see that, by a wonderful contrivance of heavenly mercy, man himself becomes the body of Jesus Christ. Now, as they who come to the faith are still, before baptism, in the bonds of their ancient servitude, but, as soon as the words of this sacrament are pronounced over them, are cleansed from all the impurity of their sins; in like manner, when the bread and wine, which are to be blessed with the heavenly words, are placed upon the holy altars, *there is no doubt*, that before they are consecrated by the invocation of the name of God, the substance of the bread and wine is still there: but *after the words of Jesus Christ are pronounced, it is the body and blood of Jesus Christ*. And is there any reason to be astonished, that he should be able to *change* by his word what he has been able to create by the same word? It even seems to be a less *miracle* to *change* into something better what already existed, than to form out of nothing what before had no existence.”

“ We will terminate the sixth age by St. Eutyches, Patriarch of Constantinople.* Of all the writings composed by him, there remains but one famous passage, which has been preserved by Nicetas Choniates, a Greek historian of the twelfth century; † the passage is this: “ He who receives but one part of the consecrated species, still *receives whole and entire the most holy body and adorable blood of the Lord*. For, although the body and the blood are divided and distributed among all, because it is mixed in each of them, it ceases not to remain always indivisible in itself; in the same manner as one only seal being stamped upon many different pieces of wax, imparts to each in particular all its figure and form, and ceases not to remain ever one and the same in itself, without permitting the multiplicity of the subjects that receive the impression of its image, to divide or change its unity: and as the voice that proceeds from one man, and to which the air responds, is whole and entire in his mouth, and penetrates whole and entire into the ears of them who hear it, so that one receives neither more nor less than another, because, although the voice is a body, being nothing else but agitated air, it is in such a manner one and indivisible as that all equally hear it, although there should be an audience of ten thousand persons: so, *no one ought to doubt*, that after the mysterious consecration and the holy fraction, the incorruptible, holy, immortal, and life-giving blood of the Lord being formed by virtue of the sacrifice in the consecrated species, impresses all its virtue in each of those who receive it, and is found whole and entire in them all, as is the case in the examples which we have adduced. These comparisons occasionally

* Elected in 550, died in 588. † In his *Annals*, B. III. p. 333. Paris.

employed by the Fathers, and which it would be unjust to examine too nicely, evidently prove, that they were convinced of the real presence, because they employ them as an expedient to give some idea of the mystery, and to assist as far as may be in shewing the possibility of it. Indeed, as it is impossible to discover any entirely just and appropriate; it is quite allowable to produce such as approach the nearest to it.

As your teachers dispute with us only the first six centuries, it would be needless to continue this traditional chain to the middle of the eleventh century, when, for the first time, the Catholic doctrine was directly attacked by Berengarius. The voice of the Christian universe was raised against him: eight successive councils, from 1053 to 1079, were assembled to extirpate so dangerous and unheard-of an error. Berengarius, after a too protracted obstinacy and many tergiversations, had the happiness to retract his heresy before his death. His last words have been transmitted to us by one of your countrymen, William of Malmesbury.* “Although Berengarius had changed his sentiments, he could not bring back to the truth those whom his false doctrine had infected..... When Berengarius himself was on the point of expiring, † on the feast of the Epiphany, the unfortunate persons whom he had corrupted in his younger day and in the first fervor of his sect, rushed into his mind, and he exclaimed, heaving a deep sigh: Jesus Christ, my God, and my Master, will appear to me on this day of his apparition, and will, I hope, make me partaker of his glory, because of my repentance; although I fear at the same time, that he may send me to punishment, because of the impenitence of those whom I have infected with my error. As for myself, being persuaded, both by the authority of the ancient Church, and by so many recent miracles, which we have seen in our days, I believe, that after the benediction of the priest, these mysteries *become the true body and blood of the Saviour of the world.*”

I will conclude these numerous quotations by the opinion and testimony of a man, who is considered, in protestant societies, as having been the light of his age. ‡ “Since the ancients, to whom the Church, not without reason, gives so much authority, are all agreed in the opinion, that the true substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ is in the Eucharist: since, in addition to all this, has been added the constant authority of the Synods, and so perfect an agreement of the Christian world, let us also agree with them in this heavenly mystery, and let us receive here below the bread and the chalice of the Lord under the veil of the species, until we eat and drink him without veil in the kingdom of God: And would that those, who have followed Berengarius in his error, would follow him in his repentance.”

And in his letter to Pellican of Alsace, || who from being guardian of the Cordeliers of Bale, became a Lutheran, went to Zurich, and there married, and died: “You were of opinion, that it should be maintained that the body of the Lord is in the Eucharist, and that we must leave to God to the manner of its presence. But I did not agree with you upon that point; for I said, that indeed this plain and simple declaration would remove great labyrinths of difficulties; but that it was a crime in a Christian not to acquiesce in the authority of the councils, and

* *Gesta Anglorum* L. III. † He died Jan. 6, 1088, aged 90. ‡ *Erasmus Preface to the Treatise on the Eucharist* by B. Alger, published by Erasmus. || In 1525.

in what the consent of all Churches and all nations has approved for so many ages. I have always declared that I could not leave this opinion, and what still more confirms me in it, is, that the Evangelists and Apostles very clearly mention the body that is given and the blood that is shed, and that it appears to be wonderfully worthy of the ineffable love of God towards man, that having redeemed him by the body and blood of his Son, he should still further choose to nourish him by his flesh and blood in an ineffable manner..... I read in the sacred scriptures, *This is my body*, which shall be given for you; *this is my blood*, which shall be shed for you. Let them say where they have read, *this is not my body, but the figure of my body; this is not my blood but the sign of my blood*. They torment themselves to shew that the name of a thing may be given to its sign. But, pray, what is there in all they say, to make me abandon a dogma, which the Catholic Church has been teaching for so many ages? Should I not be outrageously mad, if, after the decisions of the Church, I were not afraid to assert, that there is nothing but bread in the Eucharist.....? It is the Church, that has persuaded me to believe in the Gospel; the Church that has taught me how to interpret the words of the Gospel. Up to the present time, I have *adored*, together with all Christians, in the Eucharist, the same Jesus Christ who suffered for me the death of the cross, and I see not now why I should change my conduct. No human reasons shall ever prevail upon me to abandon the unanimous sentiment of all Christianity. For my mind is more touched with these words, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*, than with all the arguments of Aristotle and of all the philosophers, by which they teach that the world had no beginning. If your mind is agitated with doubts and perplexities, as you confess, it is because you make no account of the popes and the councils. My mind is confirmed in the faith, by the consent of the Catholic Church. And if you are persuaded, that there is nothing more in the Eucharist than bread and wine, I for my part must declare to you, that I should prefer being torn in pieces limb from limb, to follow your opinion, and that there is no torment I would not willingly endure, rather than leave this world after having committed so great a crime against the testimony of my own conscience."

Perhaps you will reproach me for fatiguing you with so many quotations: but I can assure you that, to spare your patience, I have confined myself to a part only of those that have come under my observation. I conceived that these would suffice by their clearness and the eminence of the personages from whom they are taken, to remove every doubt from your minds respecting their particular belief. I am convinced that the most skilful of our divines, were they to attempt at this time to give you an explanation of our mysteries, would discover nothing to say more exact, powerful and energetic than what the greater part of these Fathers have said, and would only have to repeat the expressions of these great luminaries of the Church. I am convinced even that every protestant who, with honest sincerity, shall seek before God to ascertain, from the Fathers, the belief of the first ages respecting the Eucharist, must find it from their testimonies precisely the same as Catholics now profess and will continue to profess to the end of time.

And yet there are found in protestant communities men of great knowledge, who unfortunately employ the fertility of their genius and the subtlety of their

mind in inventing turns and explanations to elude the evidence of the force of these testimonies! How omnipotent is the tyranny of prejudice over us! How lamentably are we influenced by vanity and the empty glory of supporting the cause in which we find ourselves engaged! Conscience and good sense are often subjected to their dominion, so that in our discussions, obstinacy takes the place of that candor of which we are so proud on other occasions, leads us to find doubt in what would appear as irresistible evidence, were we engaged in the opposite cause. These skillful divines therefore have invented turns and modes of expression to explain what neither bears nor needs explanation, in order to substitute obscurities for that which is as clear as the day. They have ransacked all the writings of the Fathers, to oppose passage to passage, to combat whatever is found decisive and peremptory in them by what they have sometimes written doubtful and enigmatical. This manœuvre they have more particularly employed against St. Augustin. But how deserving of our pity is such a disposition! If, as they affirm, truth is the object of their enquiry, why not candidly acknowledge that a single passage of St. Augustin's evidently shews his own doctrine and that of the whole Church, where he testifies that *no one eats of this flesh who has not first adored it?* Why not acknowledge that he was, more than the other Fathers, surrounded with pagans, whom his eloquence made most eager to hear him and read his writings: that consequently, he was more shackled by the discipline of secrecy, which he so frequently repeats, as if anxious to forwarn us of his embarrassment in developing his thoughts. On these critical and frequent occasions he covered the mysteries but did not annihilate them: he skillfully managed to speak of them so as to withhold them from the eyes of the uninitiated, while he left them open to the knowledge of the faithful. This is the truth and the real fact: this is what should be acknowledged. Why not acknowledge that he had a hundred times assisted at the liturgies of Milan: that he himself at Hippo, had day by day repeated at the altar those pathetic and inflaming prayers in which every thing speaks of the oblation, of the sacrifice, of the adoration, of the victim present by the change of substance; that it was this he so often found himself obliged to conceal and which he effectually concealed, but with great skill and without detriment to the dogma? In fine, why not acknowledge, on the one hand, that this circumspection, these enigmas and veils, would have been without aim or object, if he had thought with the modern Calvinist, because, in that case, he would have had nothing to conceal, but every thing to discover: and on the other hand, that he could not have rejected or disowned our mysteries without contradicting in his discourses and his writings what he was in the habit of practising with an angelic piety in the liturgy, and without acting a character in the pulpit totally opposed to the ministry he was discharging at the altar.

The fact is, there exists not a single passage of this great bishop, or any of the Fathers, which goes beyond that obscurity which circumstances required, not one which is not perfectly in agreement with the doctrine of the liturgies and of the Church. When you feel disposed to do so, you will find the subject at great length and discussed in a masterly style by the two greatest controversialists that have ever written on the Eucharist, Arnauld and Nicole.*

A few words more, Sir, if you please, and I shall have completed what I had

* *Perpetuite de la foi defendue*, 6 vol. in 4to. Paris 1781.

to lay before you respecting the Eucharist. My three last letters have clearly laid open to you the true sentiments of the primitive Church. Let us now compare them with those that your reformers have imputed to them; by this means we shall become convinced that they themselves were ignorant of the doctrines and sentiments of the ancient Fathers, while they pretended to lead us back to them. We must not however be too hasty and severe in accusing them of an ignorance, which belonged to the age in which they lived, and which we ourselves should have shared, had we lived in their times. Let us ever bear in mind that it was then most easy to mislead or err, because their notions concerning Christian antiquity must still have been very imperfect. Scarcely had men begun to study and examine with curious and deep research the voluminous writings of the Fathers and the acts of the councils. Their first attempts must needs have led to but very imperfect results. Few monuments had then come to light: they remained for the most part dispersed in manuscripts hard to be deciphered, scattered here and there in private libraries: and what a length of time has it taken to bring them forth to day! what criticism and examination has been necessary to ascertain their authenticity! what labor to class them methodically, to compare them with one another, and extract from them on every point a continuity of exact information respecting dogma and discipline! We now enjoy all these advantages; the reformation did not: it worked in obscurity, involved in the darkness and clouds that still were hanging upon the sixteenth century, and which were not entirely removed till the following century was far advanced. You must not therefore be surprised at discovering that the reformation, whilst it fondly considered itself as approaching nearer to the primitive doctrine, banished itself to so great a distance from it.

The general ignorance which prevailed at that time respecting Christian antiquity, has been frankly acknowledged by one of the best informed, and perhaps the most learned man of his time among the followers of the reformation. Chatillon makes the acknowledgment in these terms: * “Certainly to speak the truth, our age is still buried in the thick darkness of ignorance. The manifest proof of this appears in our important, obstinate and fatal discussions; in our numerous and ever unsuccessful conferences to settle our disputes: and, in fine, in the multitude of works which are every day appearing, and which come to an agreement upon nothing..... If the pure day of truth,” continues he, “was shining upon us, should we still be groping by the sombre and dull light of these obscure productions?”

But to confine ourselves to the Eucharistic dogmas, what more incontestable proof can there be of a general mistake, than to behold, as regards the real presence, a half of the reformed, and, as regards the change of substance, the whole reformation, imagining that these dogmas were unknown to the first ages, whereas it is so well proved in our days that the Christians of that happy age, scrupulously cherished and fostered them in their hearts in the midst of the uninitiated: and whereas, in celebrating the liturgy among themselves, they proclaimed them by a lively and profound adoration, and taught and developed them to their neophytes, with all the clearness and energy of expression at their command?

* Castalio, præf. Biblior.

How many particular examples might I not here produce of the errors and illusions, into which the most gifted of the reformers have fallen, for want of a sufficient acquaintance with antiquity? The few following appear to me rather striking: * “Æcolampadius, having written to Melanchton that the opinion of the Churches of Switzerland on the Eucharist was not contrary either to the Holy Scripture or the Fathers, Melanchton made a collection of passages from the Fathers, which he considered as favorable to him, and addressed it to Frederick Miconius, with a very warm epistle, in which he speaks with acrimony of Carlstadtus, considering him as the head of the sacramentarians.....and adding with an air of contempt that his adversaries knew only of two passages from the Fathers to allege in their favor. Æcolampadius put an end to this boasting by a dialogue..... in which he collected a quantity of passages from the Fathers, and some even which Melanchton had not seen, to prove that the opinion of our Churches was the same with that of the ancient Christians.

“This book of Æcolampadius, continues our historian and Swiss professor of the belles-lettres, “did much good and brought back many persons of learning. It also softened down Melanchton, who was much moved by it. This great man began to open his eyes, and recover a little from the violence of his prejudices; so much so, that from this time he applied himself afresh to the study of ecclesiastical antiquity, and scarcely did any thing else for six years but consult the Fathers upon this matter. Bucer pronounced this work of Æcolampadius to be excellent, and was desirous that every person interested in this dispute should take the trouble to read it and meditate carefully upon it.”

He who is well acquainted with this subject, and you, Sir, who have just read our last letters, will consider it as beyond all doubt that Melanchton, although enveloped in the same obscurity with the rest, had nevertheless guessed right, and had caught a glimpse of the real sentiments of the Fathers, while Æcolampadius, led astray by a heap of text misunderstood, was blundering at every step. And how then did the matter end? Poor Melanchton conceives himself to be fairly refuted, returns from his prejudices, as they called them, and applies himself again for six continued years to the study of the Fathers: Bucer, Bolinger, with a host of other learned investigators, not to mention our rhetorician and historian M. Ruchat, stand in astonishment at Æcolampadius's wonderful production, and thenceforward are fully convinced that the holy Fathers had actually and unceasingly thought and taught according to the Swiss divinity. From this example you may form some judgment of the ecclesiastical knowledge with which the reformers were blessed at this epoch of confusion and uproar.

Again it is to be remarked, that Æcolampadius in vain attempted to convince these clear-sighted and fastidious theologians, for he never succeeded in satisfying and convincing himself. “As far as I can conjecture from the writings of the Fathers,” says he in a letter to Zuinglius, † “the words, *This is my body*, ought to be understood of the figure. Beseech God that he would vouchsafe to open thy eyes, and mine also, if I am misled, that we may not fall into error, with the peril of so many souls. Whilst attending the disputation at Berne, ‡ he

* *Histoire de la reformation de la Suisse* par. Abraham Ruchat, professeur de belles-lettres a Lauzanne, Tom. III. p. 109, edit. Geneve, 1727. † Lib. III. Epist. quoted in Florim. p. 175. ‡ *Schluss Theol. Calvin*, lib. II. p. 68, quoted by Florim. *ibid.*

evinced considerable doubt and uncertainty as to the opinion on the Lord's supper, on which account one of his principal supporters withdrew from his party, having heard him praying in his closet: O my God! if our opinion on the Lord's supper be correct, take it, I beseech thee, into thy protection. It was Cellarius who would not risk his salvation upon the *if* of his master." (Ecolampadius, still agitated with doubts and fears, said a little before his death: "I am about to appear before the tribunal of my God, to render an account of my doctrine whether true or false."*)

But we must not as yet desert the compiler of the Swiss reformation, M. Ruchat, † who, it is to be hoped, was better versed in the belles-lettres than in history and theology. He will now furnish us with a fresh proof that, although in his native country much was said about the ancient Fathers, very little indeed was known. "In the disputation at Lausanna, Mimard, the Catholic, had asked the ministers, whether they pretended to be more learned and more enlightened by the Holy Spirit than the holy doctors Augustin, Jerome, Ambrose and Gregory, who all believed in the real presence?..... Farel took him severely to task, and maintained that he greatly displayed his ignorance by pretending that St. Augustin and the other Fathers whom he had mentioned had believed in the real presence, without producing a single passage in support of his assertion..... To all these great names he opposed the prophets, the evangelists and apostles, who never had taught any thing of what is said in the mass." It must be allowed, by way of excuse for Farel and his brother reformers, whose sentiments he expressed in their presence, that in general the liturgies were at that time but very imperfectly known, and the oriental liturgies not known at all. Farel afterwards cites some passages from St. Augustin and St. Jerome, and continues in these words: ‡ "Since St. Augustin and St. Jerome, say as we say, how dare you thus shamefully lay to our charge that we alone act and think in opposition to all? Learn to be more wise and to hold a different language; for you go too magisterially to work without either scripture or reason. It is not sufficient therefore to say: Examine and see what St. Augustin and others have written. Were they alive, they would answer you well, without saying where you must look and examine. This is speaking in the air and a betraying of ignorance."

It would appear that poor Mimard took it all for granted: we do not find that he made any reply to Farel: I suspect they were both about equally stored with erudition. But here comes Calvin who, after having long kept silence, is going to break it once again; he rises to complete the overthrow of this rash opponent. || He tells him that "he had no business to accuse the ministers of despising the ancient and holy doctors, since they were in the habit of reading and studying them..... Those who make a show of respecting them, frequently do not hold them in as much estimation as we do," adds he, "neither do they condescend to employ the time in reading their works, which we gladly employ in it... It would be easy for him to shew that the ancient and holy doctors agreed with the ministers on the controverted points of doctrine; but that for brevity's sake, he would confine himself to the subject of the present dispute, which was the real presence." Upon this he boldly quotes some words from Tertullian, St.

* Ibid. ibid. † Tom. VI. p. 165, 167, d'après les actes originaux. ‡ D'après les actes originaux. || Ibid. p. 177, 189.

Chrysostom, and above all, from St. Augustine, to the extreme satisfaction, as may be easily conceived, of his brethern of the reformation, of the deputies from some of the cantons, of the members of the council, who were all sitting in this assembly in quality of lay-judges in revealed matters, and as sovereign arbiters of the dispute carried on between mere priests, and monks whether still retaining their habits or not. Such, Sir, was the extent of their knowledge of venerable antiquity in those times. In Switzerland and on the continent similar ignorance prevailed. Do you think that men were more enlightened on these subjects in your island? You yourself shall judge from the following specimen, which shall be the last I will produce.

In 1562 appeared an apology for the Church of England, written in latin by bishop Jewel, approved by his brother divines, published by the authority of the Supreme Governness, translated immediately into several languages, and circulated through all the States of Europe, where it was highly applauded by all those who were fond of changes and novelties. The Editor of the English edition* tells us that it is not to be considered as the work of a private individual, but as a creed † and confession of the protestant faith. The principal object of the apology is to make known the real motives that induced England to separate from Rome. In it are the following passages.

“Now, if we prove ‡ and that not obscurely and craftily but in good faith before God, truly, ingenuously, clearly and evidently, that the most holy Gospel, the ancient bishops and primitive Church, agree with us, and that we have not without reason renounced the popish tenets, and returned to the apostles, and to the ancient Catholic Fathers; and if those persons, who detest our doctrine, and pride themselves on the name of Catholic, shall be clearly convinced that all their titles of antiquity, of which they so immoderately boast, belong not to them; and that there is more strength in our cause than they have been willing to allow; then we devoutly hope, that not one of them will be so careless of his salvation, as not duly and painfully to deliberate to which party he ought to belong.” ||

“Or perhaps they will affirm..... that St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, Gelasius, Theodoret, St. Chrysostom and Origen never declared the sacramental bread and wine to continue what they were in their unconsecrated state, never said that what we behold on the Lord’s table is bread; that the substance of the bread and nature of the wine remain altogether and entirely unchanged. These are the doctrines we have been taught by Christ, by the apostles, by the holy Fathers; these unaltered, uncorrupted we teach the people of God; and for this cause indeed it is that we are this day stigmatized as heretics by this usurper of religious authority. O Eternal God! And has Christ, have the apostles, have so many Fathers, all been involved together in the same error? Where Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Augustin, St. Chrysostom, Gelasius, Theodoret, all apostates from the Catholic faith? Was the singular unanimity of so many venerable bishops and learned men only an heretical conspiracy? Are *we* to be condemned for maintaining those sentiments, which gained *them* so much approbation? Has

* *Life of Jewel* prefixed to the *Apology* Edit. in 8vo. London, 1685; p. 31. † *Ab uno disce omnes.* ‡ This and the following passages from the *Apology* are taken from a recent translation of that work by the Rev. Stephen Isaacson, B. A. of Christ’s College, Cambridge, London, 1825.—Tr. || Page 57.

that, which in them was Catholic, now suddenly with the veering breath of human caprice, become schismatical?"*

What think you now sir of this tirade? Was such confident assurance ever displayed in so important and complete a mistake? To appeal so confidently to an authority by which one is to be condemned! To call upon witnesses who have the strongest evidence against us! To boast about the Fathers, while one is really opposed to them! This cannot be conceived or explained, except by the imperfect knowledge men then had of their writings, and the false notions they had adopted of their true and real doctrine.

The apologist is incessantly appealing to the primitive Church; on every question he has recourse to the authority of the Fathers, always taking them in the wrong sense, without appearing to have ever understood them, because he never made himself sufficiently acquainted with them. From among a hundred passages proving this, I must request you to read the following, in which the plan of the reformation is laid out on the principles which I have constantly admitted in our discussion.

"We indeed, as has before been asserted, have proceeded in our reformation, with the utmost caution; neither has a passion for novelty or innovation biassed us: we have advanced step by step; and have proved all things, and weighed them in the scale of impartiality and of an unprejudiced judgment. Neither should we ever have been induced to undertake this necessary reformation of religion, had not the manifest will of God, revealed in the holy scriptures, united with fears for our own salvation, absolutely compelled us to it. For although we have separated ourselves from the Church, to which they absurdly gave the name of Catholic..... yet we are satisfied..... that we have only departed from a Church, which can assert no just claim to infallibility, nay, which Christ, who is truly infallible, long before her corruptions, predicted would fall into errors: and into which errors we ourselves have ocular demonstration that she has fallen, in her long continued apostacy from the faith of the venerable Fathers of the Christian religion, of the apostles, of Christ himself; and from the doctrine and discipline of the primitive and Catholic Church. On the other hand, we have copied as exactly as we could, the pattern of the Church as it was constituted in the days of the apostles and early Catholic bishops and Fathers, and which we know was then a perfect Church, or, to use the language of Tertullian, 'An uncorrupted virgin;' inasmuch as she was as yet free from any idolatry, and had not admitted any material or universal error in faith or practice."

"Neither is it with respect to doctrine alone, but in the administration of the sacraments, and the ritual of our public worship we have also labored to reduce it to the simplicity and purity of the Primitive Model—and by thus bringing back the Gospel to its original and first state, after it had been impiously neglected and corrupted by the Church of Rome, we have only followed the example of Christ himself and all good men; and we appeal to the soundness of those principles which induced us to refer to the Original Model as the only criterion of our reformation; for the principle, says that most holy Father Tertullian, must always hold good in judging of heretical opinions: 'The Original itself is true; each later copy is less genuine.' Irenæus often appealed to the examples

* Pages 57, 58, 59.

of the most ancient Churches, as being nearer to the apostolic age; and therefore less subject to corruptions and innovations. And why is this great principle now deserted! Why do not we also return to the examples of the early Churches? Why may not we act according to the principles maintained without the least opposition by the numerous bishops and Catholic Fathers in the Council of Nice, that 'Ancient institutions should be esteemed inviolable.'"*

You have seen so far, and to the end of this discussion you will have occasion to observe, that the reformation suppressed or changed nothing of importance but what was believed and practised in the first ages: and if it was desirous of bringing us back to the faith and practice of antiquity, as it was always protesting on every occasion, it is unfortunate that it should unwittingly have done precisely the contrary to what it intended to do. But let us come to the precious morsel of the same apologist in a sermon which he had preached two or three years before † at St. Paul's-cross, London, and which, we are assured, he frequently repeated afterwards. In it he has surpassed himself: the language will astonish you.

After speaking in high strains on antiquity, as being confident that in the work of the reformation they had clung close to the sacred scripture, the holy Fathers, the doctors and councils; after asserting that they had merely rejected modern errors, and that the only dispute between the reformed and us was that we defended novel opinions, and that they admitted none but the old ones, he exclaims: "O merciful God, who would think there could be so much willfulness in the heart of man! O Gregory! O Augustin! O Hierome! O Chrysostom! O Leo! O Dionise! O Anacletus! O Sixtus! O Paul! O Christ! If we are deceived herein, ye are they that have deceived us. You have taught us these schisms and divisions, ye have taught us these heresies!" ‡

Afterwards drawing up a long catalogue of controverted articles, and among other things denying that for the six first ages it was ever taught that the body of Christ was really and substantially present in the sacrament; that his body was or could be in many places at the same time; that after the words of consecration there remained only the visible species, and not the substance of the bread and wine: and that it was the common practice among the faithful to fall on their knees before the blessed sacrament and pay divine adoration to Christ there present, he proceeds in these words: "If any learned man of all our adversaries, or of all the learned men that be alive, be able to bring any one sufficient sentence out of any old Catholic doctor or Father; or out of any old general council; Or out of the holy scriptures of God; or any one example of the primitive Church, whereby it may be clearly and plainly proved, that there was any private masse in the whole world, for the space of six hundred years after Christ, &c..... I promised then that I would give over and subscribe to him." §

This challenge appears in our days ridiculous enough, because we are now perfectly acquainted with the doctrine of the first centuries. But at that time when

* Pages 241, 242, 243. † The Copie of a Sermon preached by the Bishop of Salisburie at Paul's-Crosse the Second Sunday before Easter, in the year of our Lord God 1560, &c. In the works of the very Learned and Reverend Father in God, John Jewel, &c. London, Printed by John Norton, Printer to the King's most Excellent Majestie 1609. ‡ Page 57. § Page 58.

the doctrine of the first ages was so very little known, it passed as a splendid and undeniable proof of his superior genius and consummate knowledge. The illusion, however, was not of long continuance. Harding, Dolman and Stapleton took up the glove, and made an exposure of Jewel's folly by works which would have opened the eyes of many, had they not been immediately prohibited. It is true that, since the progress of knowledge, protestants have often reproached their apologist for insisting so much upon the authority of the Fathers and the primitive Church. But it must be acknowledged that, with the false confidence that blinded Jewel, he could not have followed a more logical course, or one more conformable with the principles of sound theology, and that, supposing antiquity had really been on his side, his triumph would have been certain and complete. If he was sincere, which is possible, God knows: and if he were to return into the world: he would be indispensably bound, according to his engagement, to reascend the pulpit in St. Paul's proud basilic and publicly subscribe to the Catholic belief, and invite all England to do the same. *

The new principles of the reformation, conceived hastily and confusedly in the darkness of ignorance, then defended by divines of considerable celebrity, adopted by the blind confidence of their followers, transmitted from father to son, and strengthened every day by authoritative instruction, at last acquired the complexion and consistency of truth, and cast the minds of men into a profound but fatal repose and security. Thenceforward they looked no farther, and would not listen to any thing that could be said against their deep-rooted opinions. This is the too common effect of prejudice: in vain does the light shine around them: they turn from it as if its dazzling splendor was an unsupportable pain to them, as if they were determined to close their eyes forever against it. Instead of listening with attention to the positive proof that such a dogma has been revealed by Jesus Christ, they will prefer believing, on the word of their teachers, that the Church, by inserting it among the articles of faith, has entirely forfeited its title

† An anecdote, which I read lately in an author deserving of credit, permits me not to place much reliance on Jewel. "When he found his end approaching, he sent for Gerbrand, his chaplain, and enjoined him to publish after his death, that whatever he had written against the Catholic doctrine, he had written against his conscience and the truth, merely to pay his court to the Queen, and to support the religion which she had introduced. Although Gerbrand never did publicly declare it, he communicated it to many private persons, among others to a physician named Twin, who was residing not long ago at Lewes, and who related it to two Catholic noblemen, from whom I learned the fact. It is now forty years since I published it in print (*in prudentiali bilance.*) Twin and these two Catholic noblemen were then living, and up to this time nobody has contradicted the report. Now, the English protestants, holding Jewel in such estimation, are looking on him as their shield and protection, would undoubtedly have given the lie to the anecdote, had they not been well aware of its truth. And more: in the *Life of Jewel*, p. 101, Humphrey says, that a rumor had gone abroad that his hero had, before his death, abjured the faith of antiquity to become papist again. What could give rise to such a rumor, but the injunction given to his chaplain?" See *Flores hist. eccl. gentis angl.* Lib. I., cap. XIII. p. 56. (Paris 1553, in fol., Bibliot. royal) by Dr. Smith, bishop of Chalcedon, who wrote this work at the advanced age of eighty-seven.

to infallibility.* Is there a more disheartening and melancholy function than that in which a minister dedicates himself to the enlightening a people who will not be enlightened? Of what use is it to have consumed one's time and strength in serving them? of what use to have laboriously searched out the passages of the Fathers about the Eucharist, to have brought them forward in their natural order and thus to have produced a most satisfactory agreement, and an irresistible effulgency of ancient evidence? They do not read even Bossuet; and do you expect to get your evidence read! have I often said to myself, and then flung the pen from my hand. Have I done wrong in resuming it? and shall I have labored in vain for so many of my mistaken brethren? I shall at least have fulfilled the duty to the performance of which I have thought myself more particularly called.

* *Vel sola transubstantiatio Romana Ecclesia fundamentum diruit (Nubes Testium,* by J. Alphonsus Turretinus, p. 41, Edit. in 4to. Gen. 1719.) Such a sentiment delivered with magisterial authority is for young disciples an oracle, the effect of which they never recover. Two hundred years earlier, some excuse might have been found for the Genevan professor, but at the epoch when he was writing and dictating lessons of theology, it is unpardonable to have been ignorant that the most splendid genuises of antiquity had taught this dogma, and that the primitive Church had believed it, as we also believe it together with her. How came he not to know, that Faustus Socinus candidly acknowledges the same in a letter to his friend, (*Epist. ad Rade-cium*, tom. I. p. 381, edit. 1636.) "If we must in this matter abide by the Fathers, our cause is lost;" that Luther for a long time approved of and permitted transubstantiation; and that the confession of Wittemberg made no difficulty in declaring: "We believe the power of God to be so great, that it can in the Eucharist *destroy* the substance of bread and the substance of wine, and change them into his own body and blood," &c. &c. &c. Page 44, an. 1536.

LETTER XI.

Confession.

If the article I propose for our discussion this day were not necessary for salvation, I would yield to the extreme repugnance you have often testified towards it, and pass over in silence a subject which hitherto has inspired you with nothing but feelings of estrangement and alarm. "What! would you have me reveal to a man like myself all the irregularities of my life and all my secret sins known to God alone! must I expose the shame of my conduct and most secret thoughts! give a full detail of the disorders which I have so carefully concealed from the world, and which I could wish, were it possible to erase from the memory of my accomplices and even from my own! must I lay open my secret intentions my motives and mad desires, the very remembrance of which still cover me with unutterable confusion! No, Sir, it is more than I can submit to: the humiliation is quite intolerable; and, though you should demonstrate every other article of your religion; this alone of confession would for ever withhold me from your communion." This language is alarming, but it does not at all surprise me. Such expressions and a similar aversion are common to you with many others. When discussing the subject of religion, I have found them in numbers of your countrymen, some of whom I have had the consolation to see enter our communion, although for a length of time alarmed and scared by this ultimate obstacle. I have found them sometimes in myself: there are few Catholics who will not make to you the same confession; few who cannot tell you how much it has cost them, on certain occasions, to surmount the shame and suggestions of humbled self-love. It is also to be feared that there are but too many examples among us of persons who, after having at length summoned the courage to approach the confessional, have not had resolution enough to com-

plete at the feet of the priest the painful recital of their crimes, and who have been led on by a false shame to the commission of sacrilege.

But what will you say, Sir, if I undertake to lead you to confession by the very sentiment which scares you the most away from it? Such, however, is my intention: you are about to find it turned into a proof against you. From this natural repugnance, experienced in all ages, it appears to me that a powerful consequence may be deduced; and lest it should escape us in the course of this discussion, it shall be introduced here at the outset. In fact, if you will reflect, the aversion that we all feel against this most humiliating act of repentance, has so imperious an ascendancy over our minds, that no earthly power could ever succeed in compelling us to surmount it. Imagine to yourself the most absolute monarch, the most ancient and universal council, and you have all that is most imposing belonging to earth or heaven: yet these would never succeed by their own authority, either in forcing this act of obedience,¹ or in persuading us to

¹ We know that after having set aside the divine precept of confession, and abolished its usage, the magistrates of Nuremberg, quickly terrified at the prevalence of crime within their town, had recourse to Charles V., the most powerful monarch of Europe, requesting him to send forth an imperial decree for the re-establishment of auricular confession. But the precept of God being once trodden under foot, what could these magistrates expect from a monarch, who, although he possessed the power to bend their knees, had not the power to open their consciences? Charles V. treated their petition as it deserved.

It may be a matter of curiosity and surprise to an Englishman to find the above mode of argumentation, discussed by the pen of one of his ancient sovereigns, Henry VIII. "Put the Case, that not one Word was particularly, or figuratively read of *Confession* nor any Thing spoken of, it by the *Holy Fathers*; Yet when I consider that all People have discovered their Sins to the Priests, for so many Ages; when I consider the Good that continually follows the practice of it, and no Evil at all; I cannot think, or believe it to be established, or upheld by any human Invention, but by the divine Order of God. For the People could never, by any human Authority, be induced to discover their secret Sins which they abhor in their Consciences, and which they are so much concerned to conceal, with such Shame and Confusion, and so undoubtedly to a man that might, when he pleased, betray them. Neither could it happen, that among such great Numbers of *Priests*, some good, and some bad, indifferently hearing *Confessions*, they should all retain them; and that also, when some of them can keep Nothing else secret; if God himself, the Author of the *Sacrament* did not, by his special

submit to this odious yoke. The command must absolutely have come from heaven; from Him who reads the heart and rules the conscience; and the first Christians must have heard it from Jesus Christ himself, or his apostles. They must have been firmly convinced, that according to the ordinance of Christ, there is no pardon to be expected for sins committed after baptism, except by the voluntary acknowledgment of them to his ministers. and the Christians of every age, for all have sinned, and the greater part grievously, must have felt themselves in the inevitable alternative of sacrificing, either shame to salvation, or salvation to shame. Observe again that the children of the reformation shook off the yoke of confession, as soon as they understood from their leaders that it was nothing more than a purely ecclesiastical institution: so true it is, that in the beginning, men could never have submitted to it upon any other ground than considering it as a divine precept. You may seek, as long as you please, for some other origin of a practice, the very idea of which alarms self-love; to me it appears impossible to find any other than the express command of Jesus Christ.

Accordingly, he has given this command.¹ So we are taught by the Church, and this is sufficient to oblige all to believe it, according to the doctrine we have solidly established. But since upon this subject, as well as upon preceding ones, you require of me to justify her decrees, let us again examine the double deposit of revelation, and see whether scripture and tradition actually teach that confession was instituted by Jesus Christ as a necessary means for obtaining the pardon of sins committed after baptism. We read in St. Matthew², that our Saviour promised his apostles that whatsoever they should bind on earth, should be bound also in heaven; and that whatsoever they should loose on earth, should be loosed also in heaven. We read in St. John³, that, after his resurrection and before his return to his Father, Grace, defend this so wholesome a Thing. For my Part, let LUTHER say what he will, I will believe that *Confession* was instituted, and is preserved by God himself; not by any Custom of the People, or Institution of the *Fathers*." *Defence of the Seven Sacraments*. ¹The Holy Scripture. ²Ch. xviii. 18. ³Ch. xx. 73.

he confirmed his promise; and in order that the world might have nothing to say against the prerogative to which the apostle would boldly lay claim of forgiving sins, he establishes the right he confers upon them on his own heavenly mission, and invests them with the power he had received from his Father. "As the Father hath sent me I also send you. When he had said this he breathed on them; and he said unto them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." And because the work which our Saviour was come to establish was to be as durable as the world: and the power of remitting or retaining sins was not to be less necessary in the course and till the consummation of this work, than in its establishment, it cannot be doubted that in the person of the apostles, our Saviour had an eye to their successors, just the same as he had in the other command: "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c." Now the power he confers upon them, before his ascension, consists not merely in forgiving sins, but in forgiving or retaining them, whence it follows that this power must be exercised with prudence and discretion, lest they should forgive when they ought to retain, or retain when they ought to forgive. It is a judgment of clemency or rigor which the ministers have to pronounce, according as they consider that the sins can or cannot as yet be pardoned. But how are they to come to a reasonable decision as to whether they can or cannot forgive the sins: unless they know them well, and not only their numbers and quality, but also whatever may considerably aggravate or extenuate them, and moreover, the natural dispositions of the sinners? It is evident that all this is indispensably necessary for enlightening the mind, and directing the minister to pass a just sentence. Now, as spiritual judges have not the privilege of reading the thoughts and the heart of man any more than the judges of the land, they cannot arrive at a sufficient knowledge of all these circumstances by any other means than by the frank and voluntary declaration of the sinner himself: and this is precisely what we call confession. You see it is so essentially connected with

the judicial power given by Christ to his ministers, that, without it, it would be altogether impossible for them to exercise their functions.

To this simple and natural mode of argumentation, the followers of the reformation have often replied, that the power given by our Saviour to the apostles was not that of judging, but merely that of declaring that sins are forgiven or retained. But whence, let me ask, do they gain this idea? Do they find it in the Scripture? In the sacred books there is not a single word about this passive and declaratory ministry. Jesus Christ does not say whose sins you shall declare to be forgiven, but whose sins you shall forgive, and whose sins you shall retain. Between the two there is a manifest and essential difference. Our Saviour's words are too clear to need any explanation: the substitution of this declaratory sense, in place of the plain and obvious meaning of the passage, is an audacious and sacrilegious attempt to take away from Christ his own words, and to put the words of man into his mouth, as if he could have made use of a false or incorrect expression. And, after all, what more is gained by it, than throwing back the difficulty a little? For how is a minister to declare that sins are forgiven or retained, unless he knows the sins? Is he to declare the sins to be forgiven on the vague and general assurance given by the penitent of his repentance? But supposing that the sinner deceives you, or deceives himself, mistaking a passing emotion for a solid repentance, for you have not tried his repentance; supposing that the habit is inveterate, that he is in the immediate occasion of sin, that he has not quitted his unlawful profession, negociation, or connection; supposing that he has not repaired the injury done by him, or restored ill-acquired goods or possessions, &c. Respecting all these essential points, you know nothing of his state. Will you, then, in such ignorance declare that God has forgiven him? Very possibly you ought to make quite an opposite declaration. You know nothing for certain in the case; except that you put forth your declaration at hazard and in the dark, and leave it to take its chance; and that you cannot rea-

sonably take upon yourself to give any such decision, without a previous and sufficient declaration of the sins committed, and the actual disposition of the sinner. Here again, then, according to your own explanation, of the words of Christ, confession is necessary.

I see clearly, you will acknowledge, that the apostles and their successors could not remit or retain sins, without knowing them, and that in this point of view, confession is of divine institution. But I do not see how sinners are obliged to apply to the apostles and their successors to receive the pardon of their faults, and how confession is therefore to be considered necessary. Jesus Christ has said: Whatsoever you shall forgive or retain shall be forgiven or retained; but he has not said: Whatsoever you shall not forgive shall not be forgiven. And yet, it seems to me that he should have said so, if he had intended to oblige us to accuse ourselves of our faults before his ministers, for the obtaining of pardon from them.

I grant you that this negative clause is not expressly read in the Gospel in so many words; but if it is clearly deduced from it, you will be equally obliged to admit it, even according to the article of your Convocation in 1562, which declares that it receives whatever is clearly read in the scriptures or consequentially drawn therefrom. You shall now judge of the correctness of our deduction respecting confession. If the confession of sins was not a necessary condition for obtaining the forgiveness of them, Jesus Christ must have taught some other means of obtaining pardon, independent of confession. You believe, according as you have learnt from the divines of your Church, that it is quite sufficient for the remission of sins, to have repented and accused yourself in general of them before God, without going to reveal them to his ministers. That this expedient is most convenient and comfortable cannot be denied; for thus, every sinner is much at his ease, quite left to his own discretion, and emancipated from the shame and repugnance of exposing to the priest, the humiliating and bitter history of his disorders. For, of two means, men will always choose that which is the most easy and

which most admirably conciliates the interests of salvation and of self-love. After this, confession, which we have seen to be of divine institution falls to the ground and remains without honor and without effect. Moreover from its very institution, it would not have obtained more success. The same cause would have produced the same estrangement: the repugnance against it not being less then than since, the preference would have been given to the most convenient means, and from the very first times confession would have had the same fate which it has had in your country; it would have been confined to books alone, and have been laid aside in practice. The apostles and their successors would have had no more right in one age than in another, to compel any one to make use of it. For the sinners of every age would have been equally authorized to reply, that, Jesus Christ having permitted them to confess to God alone, they merely acted according to the option granted to them. But you know, Sir, and your divines know also, whether it was thus that the apostles and their successors did act; whether they ever recognized this right to choose in sinners, and whether the penitents ever laid claim to it during the golden ages of the Church. Conclude therefore with me, that this liberty of choice is but a chimera, newly invented, to give a wider range to conscience; and that the institution of Confession allows of no other more easy expedient.

See now to what this system of liberty of choice conducts us: we must believe that instead of subjecting penitents to his ministers in the paths of salvation, Jesus Christ has done quite the opposite, and has appointed that the jurisdiction of the dispensers of his mysteries should depend upon the good pleasure of the sinner; should be real and effective, when they think proper to have recourse to it; inert and null, when they choose to withdraw themselves from it, and procure the pardon of their offences in another more convenient way. We must say also that, in the economy of the new law, the apostles, and their successor would have been judges of the consciences, and might not have been judges, at the same time. They would have been judges, by

the right given them by Christ, as we have seen: they might not have been judges, according to the whim of sinners, and in point of fact, because, if every one used his right, it might happen that no one would choose to make use of their judgment.

But, you will reply, whilst we deny that confession is necessary, we make no difficulty in admitting that it is useful, and this is sufficient to induce penitents to have recourse to it. I deny, Sir, that it is sufficient, and you yourselves are an evident proof of its insufficiency. I have lived a long time in your country, and have had much intercourse with the members of the established Church of England and Scotland; but never have I heard any of them speak of going to confess to his pastor, or that he had ever done it during the course of his life. And yet you all praise confession, and its numerous advantages; some of your divines have highly eulogized it, and your rubrick recommends it.¹ But these eulogiums are only in theory and specula-

¹ According to the rubrick for communion, eight days before administering it, the minister shall give warning to his parishioners, and shall admonish them of the dispositions they are to bring to it; that they are to be careful in examining their consciences, and if they have offended by will, word, or deed, that they are to confess themselves to Almighty God..... that if any of them be a blasphemers of God, or a hinderer or slanderer of his word, or an adulterer, or be in malice or envy, or in any other grievous sin, that he is to repent of his sins, or else come not to the holy table. "And because it is requisite that no man should come to the holy communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience: therefore, if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel; let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

And in the visitation of the sick, the minister is enjoined to move the sick person "to make a SPECIAL CONFESSION OF HIS SINS, if he feels his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession, the priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort. *Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners, who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and BY HIS AUTHORITY COMMITTED TO ME, I ABSOLVE THEE from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*"

"Private confession unto a priest is of very ancient practice in the Church, of excellent use and benefit; being discreetly handled. We refuse it to none, if men require it, if need be to have it: we urge and persuade it *in extremis*: we require



tion, sterile in point of practice, and of no use in the ordinary course of life. The utility of confession suffices not therefore to conduct sinners to it.

it in the case of perplexities for the quieting of men disturbed, and their consciences." *

Bishop Andrews, his contemporary, has gone still farther and acknowledged the necessity of confession. In his *Court Sermon, on St. John XX. v. 23. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven*, he argues as follows: † "We are not, the ordinance of God thus standing, to rend off one part of the sentence: Three are here expressed, three persons: 1. the person of the sinner, in *whose*: 2. of God, in *are forgiven*: 3. of the priest, in *you shall forgive*. Three are expressed; and where three are expressed, three are required; and where three are required, two are not enough." It is clear, from this simple and just reasoning that confession made to God alone cannot suffice since the institution by Jesus Christ. "It is St. Augustin that thus speaketh of this ecclesiastical act in his time" continues bishop Andrews: and he then quotes a passage which I shall produce later; and then makes the following just observation. "God ordinarily proceedeth, in remitting sin, by the Church's act. And hence they have their part in this work, and cannot be excluded; no more in this than in other acts and parts of their function. And to exclude them is (after a sort) to wring the keys out of their hands, to whom Christ hath given them, is to cancel and make void this clause of *You shall forgive*, as if it were no part of the sentence; to account of all this solemn sending, and inspiring, as if it were an idle and fruitless ceremony." Why has not this been the constant language made use of in your Church? In the above passage is shewn the truth and the energy of plain and simple argumentation. How is it possible after this, for any one to refuse to yield, in a matter so essential, and so decisive of our eternal salvation?

Perhaps you would wish to hear what Luther has to say upon the subject. He admits that confession is of admirable utility: and desires that it should be continued as it was used in his time. "Man," says he, "ought to confess to God all his faults, even those that he knows not of; and to his director those only that he knows and feels in his conscience." Have we ever required more? In fact, is it possible to require more? If he was to conclude by teaching what the Church teaches, why did he make so tumultuous a disturbance in the world, to give mankind to understand that confession to God *alone* was sufficient; that if they addressed themselves to his minister, which was indeed useful, it sufficed to acknowledge themselves guilty in general terms, without declaring in what, or to what extent; that the enumeration of their offences was only of ecclesiastical ordinance, &c.?

Calvin makes no difficulty in admitting the advantages of confession: but acknowledging its utility, he denies its necessity. Sometimes he discovers its origin about the end of Decius and its termination under Nectarius; at other times, he says that it was unknown during the six first ages, and was introduced

* Dr. Montague, bishop of Chester. *Appeal*, Ch. XXXII. † Sermon preached at the Court of King James 1.

I know, it sometimes happens amongst you, that a sick man, oppressed by the remorse of certain grievous transgressions, desires, or consents at least to see an ecclesiastic: he is induced to repose in his bosom the weight with which he is oppressed: the minister receives this sorrowful deposit, replies with words of kindness, gives him absolution, unites his prayers with those of his penitent, and takes, as you express it, the sacrament with him. The unfortunate man enjoys some little calm and repose; he sleeps till death in an illusion, which is to disappear at the tribunal of God. For has he made a sufficient confession of his faults? After a life of essential omissions and multiplied disorders, has he had the thought to accuse himself entirely of them, at least to the best of his power? He is satisfied with revealing some enormities, with which his conscience was terribly tormented. He goes therefore to present himself before God with all those stains, which his imperfect confession and a null absolution could not remove; for you, who require that every thing should be seen in scripture, where do you find in scripture that a half confession and absolution are sufficient? Does not one single mortal crime, or an attachment to one single vicious habit, destroy us without resource? Can a man be reconciled to God in one part of his conscience, and not in another? Can grace and sin be found together in the same soul? Do we not read that nothing defiled can enter heaven, and that the violation of one single precept is sufficient to exclude us from it? Or, has Jesus Christ said, that the absolution of the greatest crimes shall draw after it that of the lesser, but yet grievous faults? No, Sir, it is not so: it is no where written so, but it is written, that he has given to his ministers the power of forgiving or retaining all sins; and as they cannot reasonably exercise either of these powers,

by the council of Lateran. Sometimes in the furious transports of his blind zeal, he forgets what he has said in its favor, and declaims against it as a tyranny, an abomination, a pest, a torture invented by pope Innocent III.

‘What works of mercy are the works of the Gospel! What reparations and restitutions does not confession cause to be made among Catholics! Among all, what effect has the approach of the period for communion in producing reconciliations and alms-deeds.’ Rousseau, *Emile*, tom. III.

without knowing the sins in their full extent, it is necessary, as far as can be done, that all the sins should be declared to them; and of course, absolution is null, when a deliberately partial confession has been made.

It is written again, "If we confess our sins, Jesus Christ is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity."¹ That the confession here spoken of by St. John refers to that, which is made to a priest, and not to God alone: that it extends to every sin committed, and not merely to a few, there needs but a trifling attention to prove: for 1st, the apostle speaks of a confession, which suffices for the remission of sins. If the confession made to God alone were sufficient, Jesus Christ would have given to his ministers the power of absolving to no purpose, because the first means being more easy, and of as certain an effect; it is clear that sinners would be perfectly satisfied with it; therefore our Saviour would not have spoken the truth, when he promised to his substitutes, that whatever they should bind upon earth should be bound also in heaven; because in spite of all their bonds, sinners would become free and unshackled, by turning themselves directly to God. It will follow by consequence, that St. John here understands confession, such as, from its establishment after the resurrection, it has always been practised in the Church. And this also he insinuates by reminding us that Jesus Christ will be faithful to his promise of forgiving us our sins. For we see clearly that by investing his ministers with the power of binding and loosing, he attaches to this power the promise of pardon; but we no where read that he has attached it to confession made only to God.

2d. The confession of which the apostle here speaks, must not be confined to certain faults, but extended to them all. Indeed, according to his doctrine, Jesus Christ, being faithful and just, will forgive us the sins we shall confess. Remark that the confession of our sins is a condition, to which he has attached our pardon, "if we confess our sins." Now, on this condition says St. John, Jesus Christ will forgive us our sins; he speaks gene-

¹ St. John, 1 Ep. 1, 9.

rally, and makes no exceptions. There ought therefore to be no exception made in the confession, that we are bound of necessity to make; and in order that there may remain no doubt as to the universality of the pardon, he adds that he will "cleanse us from all iniquity." This supposes that the condition is fulfilled on our part by the complete confession of all our sins. In a word, according to St. John, the confession of sins must precede the remission; all the sins are forgiven; therefore, all the sins must have been confessed.

Let me conjure you to form true and exact notions respecting this dogma: error on this point would be highly dangerous, since your salvation is at stake. The utility alone of confession would but ill correspond with the views of our Saviour, who would have given to his vicars nothing but an empty title, and a phantom of authority, in giving them the power to absolve, if he had not, by so doing, obliged sinners to subject themselves to it. Utility alone would not be sufficient to make them have recourse to it, in preference to a more convenient means, since in your Church, where this utility is recognized, no one in health ever thinks of taking advantage of it, because he does not consider it as obligatory; and if any think proper to make use of it in their last illness, to which circumstance confession seems with you to be confined, they have recourse to it after a manner so incomplete and erroneous, that it must be regarded as null. To reason consequently, let us say that every man, by losing his baptismal innocence, becomes subjected to the jurisdiction with which Jesus Christ has invested his ministers; that he is necessarily amenable to their tribunal for all the evil he has committed; and that in order to obtain the pardon of his faults, it is no longer sufficient for him to lament them in himself, and before God; he must, also when it can be done, humble himself so far as to confess them without disguise, and to the best of his power, in order to receive the benefit of sacerdotal absolution. Such is most certainly the order established by our divine legislator; such is his will, and if it is not traced in express terms in scripture, it is there found very sufficiently marked out. The necessity of con-

fession springs from its very institution, and both are as intimately connected with the words of our Saviour as effect is with its cause.

The enemies of sacramental confession have omitted nothing to destroy every vestige of it in primitive tradition. They used violence to the monuments of antiquity; they have brought them together, less, it would seem, with a view to elicit truth, than to envelope it in darkness. When, in the first ages, they meet with the word confession, they stiffly maintain that it refers to the confession, which was made to God alone, or partially to the apostles and their disciples. When they discover it in the more numerous monuments of the third and fourth ages, they contend that it merely refers to a public confession, which, they say, always forming a part of solemn penance, ought necessarily to be referred to it, and could only have originated with it: that this public penance being nothing but a regulation of Church discipline, the confession which accompanied it was a part of the same regulation; that consequently it could not without error be attributed to Jesus Christ, because public penance comes not undoubtedly from him. And because after the abrogation of public confession, at the end of the fourth century, in the Greek Churches, and later in the Latin Churches, they observe private confession to be in vigor, they have concluded from this that it received its origin from the former, and had supplanted it, and that without overturning the rules of sound reason, there could not be given to the daughter a date anterior to the existence of the mother; and consequently, that it could not be traced back to the apostolic age.

Now you shall soon see, that the conjectures of these divines, and their learned researches have terminated in inverting the natural and legitimate order in this genealogy of the two confessions; that according to the principles of common sense, which they extol, they ought to have honestly acknowledged that public confession sprung from private confession, and that we cannot suppose the former to have had any other extraction, without at the same time rejecting what reason teaches, and positive authorities demonstrate. The following considerations, by casting

some light on a subject, on which confusion has not been thrown without design, will, I flatter myself, suffice to convince you of these two points, first, that without the divine institution of sacramental confession, the establishment of public confession would have been impracticable in the Church; in the second place, that public confession, such as it was practised, could not be conceived but on the supposition that it was preceded by private confession. I shall prove, after this, the justices of this second assertion, by positive and peremptory authorities; and then it will be no longer possible to doubt that, in point of right and fact, private and entire confession invariably preceded that confession, which was made partially in public.

1. I maintain that, without the divine institution of sacramental confession, the establishment of public confession would have been absolutely impracticable in the Church. Call to mind here, Sir, that extreme repugnance which you have so often testified to confession, such as for many ages has been going on between the priest and the penitent. We have seen that this repugnance has existed at all times and in all men, because it has its root in that self-love, which is born with us, and is inherent in our nature; that consequently no human power could ever have succeeded in subduing it. And how then, I ask, should it have triumphed over it, by given it new strength, and pushing it to the last extremity? For here the question is, not to go and declare in secrecy our faults to one single minister of Jesus Christ, bound by every law, natural, divine, and human, and under pain of the severest punishments, to keep an inviolable secrecy; but before all the faithful indiscriminately, before our friends and acquaintance, before our domestics, our children, strangers and enemies. The very idea of this is most repugnant to our feelings. What man, in compliance with a mere point of discipline, would ever have consented to go through so revolting a humiliation, if he had thought that Jesus Christ required of him no more than to confess his sins to God alone. There is no one who does not feel most decidedly in himself, that all the powers of the world put together would never have been able to

force the people to it; much less would they have attempted to have subjected themselves to it.

Will your divines reply, that this confession of the ancient times extended not to every fault, that it was confined to public offences, and that it is less painful to self love to acknowledge in public what is unknown to no one, than to declare to a single individual what is not known by him?

It seems, it is true, that thus the most sensible part of the confusion and shame is taken away from public confession, when once it is limited to crimes publicly committed. Yet however there would still remain sufficient to terrify human nature, and should they have a right, which they have not, to confine this confession to public transgressions, they would not explain any better the qualities and the characters, which I discover belonging to it in antiquity, and which it is impossible not to perceive. For observe, that if, in the ordinary course of civil society, a person has the misfortune publicly to commit a serious crime, and an injurious, cruel, or infamous action, he never wants excuses for its extenuation. It was done by a sudden impulse, over which he had no control; he was not master of himself; he knew not where he was, or what he said, or what he did; it was done more through levity, than any intention to injure, and he did not foresee the fatal consequences; or else, he had been outrageously provoked, or hurried on by drunkenness or passion. But in the ancient penance, at the entrance of a Church, in the habit of mourning, with the head shaved, no palliations, excuses, or pretexts were heard. The sinner sincerely deposed against himself, was his own accuser, exposed to light his own baseness and perversity, acknowledged that he did it with full deliberation, and displayed to men the full deformity of his conduct, and the tears and lamentation, which accompanied the manifestation of his crimes, manifested his sincere repentance. I can conceive the courageous resignation of these penitents in thus drinking all the bitterness of the chalice, if they were persuaded that Jesus Christ presented it to them by the hands of his ministers. I can conceive their peaceful resignation, if they imagine they are sub-

mitting to a person invested with divine authority, if in the order, which they have received, they have heard the sentence of God himself; if they are convinced that they must comply with it on earth, in order to be pardoned in heaven. Without this, I know not how to account for it, and this public confession, even of notorious crimes alone, presents to me nothing but a phenomenon contrary to every moral law, and to the constitution of the human heart.

Do not deceive yourself, Sir; we must proceed a step further; for it is most positively false that this confession was confined to public crimes alone, since the most secret faults were often there severely condemned. We learn from Irenæus,¹ that many women had, for a long time, been seduced by the artifices and the discourse of the heretic Marcus; but that, returning to the Church, they had confessed that this hypocrite after having cast them, by means of his potions and charms, into a bewildered state, in which they had no power over themselves, had shamefully abused their persons. The wife of a deacon, as this same father relates,² had deserted her husband to follow this magician; she had shared the fate of the other victims; at last opening her eyes to the indignity of her conduct, she spent the remainder of her days in public penance, bewailing the disgrace which this seducer had brought upon her. These faults were secret, and yet were publicly confessed, since they came to the knowledge of the historian who relates them. The same author³ tells us again, that Cerdo passed his life in leaving the Church, and returning to it, in secretly spreading the poison of his doctrine, and in publicly accusing himself of the same. Eusebius⁴ relates that of the three calumniators, who had blackened the reputation of Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, two having made an unhappy end, the third fearing the like fate, submitted to make a public manifestation of the odious conspiracy that he had plotted with his two accomplices, and to undergo a long and severe course of penance. He says, moreover, that some confessors of the faith, deceived by the austere doctrine of the relentless and audacious Novatus, but having

¹ L. I. c. IX. ² *ibid.* ³ III. c. IV. ⁴ L. VI. c. IX.

afterwards acknowledged their errors, divulged in the Church their own wickedness and that of Novatus.

Does not Tertullian rise up, with the vigor of his character and the energy of his style, against those timid and falsely delicate souls, which had not the courage to manifest their faults and lay open the folds of their conscience, and which, delighting to escape from men, as if they could escape God, perished eternally with their foolish shame, like to those sick persons, who, being attacked in their secret members, and not being able to resolve upon exposing them to the eye of the physician, sunk for want of assistance, under the evil which they obstinately concealed? Our adversaries, for fear of discovering sacramental confession so high in antiquity, will have it that Tertullian here points out confession before all the Church. Be it so. What will they gain by it? For is it not evident that in that case Tertullian included secret faults? It is then true that they were, sometimes at least, to be publicly divulged. This I could prove to you by still other authorities; but I suppress them, lest too long an interruption should make us loose the thread of our argument. Let me then intreat you to lay it down as a certain foundation that public confession was not confined to notorious crimes alone, and that oftentimes the most unknown and secret crimes were not exempt from it. Thus our first arguments resume their full force, and without repeating them here, we are authorized to consider it as morally impossible that a purely human power should, of its own authority, independently of heaven, have established among Christians this kind of public confession, whether for notorious crimes or secret sins. But, the divine institution of sacramental confession once admitted, the necessity of recurring to the ministers of Christ for obtaining the pardon of sins being once acknowledged, the whole question takes a different appearance; it is no longer man that we obey, when by his order we make this public declaration of our guilt; it is Jesus Christ himself, whose mandate is communicated to us by the organ of his minister: and this explains every thing. Is it, in fact, any thing too painful, when we are persuaded that it is God who command-

it? any thing too humiliating, when we seek to disarm his justice and move his clemency? I admire the ancient penitents, but am no longer surprised at their submission and sincerity. I see what occasioned their obedience, their tears and lamentations and long continued trials. This world had nothing to do with it: it was all done with reference to him who dispenses life and death as he pleases, and who cannot be deceived, because he reads the thoughts and the heart of man. You see now, Sir, that confession, such as it was practised in public, is naturally accounted for, under the influence of sacramental confession, whereas without this latter, it remains as unaccountable as it would have been impracticable in all ages.

2. Passing to my second assertion, I entreat you to catch my meaning correctly. I said that even secret faults were not exempt from public confession, but by no means insinuated that they were always subjected to it. Sometimes they were as I have proved; sometimes they were not, as every one will allow. Now what is the meaning of this diversity of expiations in secret sins, and of this disparity of treatment to which they are subjected? It teaches us, if we consider it rightly, that public confession could proceed only from private confession, as you shall now see. It is a fact that, according to times and persons, the most secret faults were sometimes obliged to be divulged and sometimes not so: that oftentimes, being treated as notorious crimes, a manifestation of them was required, and that more frequently they were left buried in the consciences of the penitents and the confidence of the confessor. In all secret faults therefore, there was a choice and discernment to be made between those which were to be publicly confessed, and those which were to be kept in secrecy. Now whose part was it to make this choice and selection? It must have been done either by the minister of Jesus Christ in the tribunal of private confession, or out of the tribunal by the criminal himself, according to his own discretion and the degree of his repentance. It must have been done by one or other of these ways: no medium can be discovered. To whom then, I ask, are we to attribute the making of this selection and

choice? If you leave it at the disposal of the sinner, it must be said, that by a disciplinary enactment, penitents were bound to go of themselves and make a public proclamation, both of their notorious crimes, and also of certain secret sins; that with regard to the latter, it was left to their judgment to decide, according to their own lights, what sins they should, or should not reveal in public. But, admitting, what to me appears an impossibility, that their fervor could have subdued their repugnance, and that the Christians of those times would have consented to conform to a discipline purely ecclesiastical; who does not see at first sight the numberless abuses unavoidably arising from it? How many indiscretions would have been committed through the simplicity of some, the blind zeal of others, through the fear of saying too little, and above all through defect of judgment so common in mankind, and a confusion of ideas which prevails in most of us! Some would pass over in silence what ought to have been made manifest; others would reveal what should have been kept concealed. What enmities and animosities would result from such indiscretions! How many persons' characters would be exposed! What jealousies awakened! How many suspicions in society, troubles in families, and scandals in the Church! These would be without number, and beyond imagination great. No, Sir, a discipline so foolish and extravagant would never have held eight days together; and yet there are those, who would palm the honor of it upon sage and venerable antiquity! It cannot be supposed for an instant; and I should be ashamed even to make it the subject of an argument.

We are compelled therefore to admit, that the choice and selection, of which we speak, appertained to the dispensers of the mysteries, which evidently supposes that the penitents began by depositing all their faults in the bosom of the bishop or priest, that he gave his judgment upon them; and that this sacramental confession preceded every public confession, and it alone determined when the public confession was to be made. Upon this plan all abuses disappear. If a sinner was desirous of recovering the favor of God, he addressed himself to the bishop or priest,

and made an humble and sincere confession of all his sins; the director, after having heard his confession, weighed in his mind the advice he was to give, and the conduct he was to prescribe. The principles he had unceasingly before his eyes could tend to nothing else than to the reparation of the injuries done to man, or to religion, the utility or advancement of the penitent in virtue, the safety of his person, the care of his and his neighbor's reputation, and the general edification. If among these sins, there were some weighty and notorious crimes, these were ordered to be confessed publicly for the reparation of the scandal given. If in the secret sins, there were found some, the publication of which would turn to the advantage of all, or of an individual, without hurting a third person, this publication was prescribed: thus the calumniator, who survived his two accomplices, was condemned to make public the falsities, with which he had blackened the reputation of Narcissus the bishop; and the women, seduced by Marcus, were compelled to reveal their own turpitude, in order to unmask that hypocrite, and arrest the progress of his heresy, and of his shameful practices. Had the director to heal a proud and haughty spirit, after having in vain tried milder remedies, he would at length have reduced it to the humiliating mortification of a public accusation, in order by this means to subdue that pride which till then could not be brought under. But if the safety or reputation of individuals was found to be compromised by an open confession, a prudent ecclesiastic would have been most careful not to command it, and the Church itself had forbidden it: thus the man guilty of theft or murder, although subjected to a long and severe course of penance, could not be subjected to a public accusation, which would have exposed him to the animadversion of the civil laws; in the same manner, a woman guilty of adultery, which the laws punished with death, was indeed placed amongst the penitents, but in one of those degrees, which served rather to conceal than cause suspicion of her crime.¹ Thus the Church knew well how to reconcile the

¹ Our fathers have forbidden us publicly to disgrace "women guilty of adultery, whether it be that they have piously mentioned it in confession, or that they

interests of heaven with those of the earth, the honor and the safety of individuals with their advancement in virtue, the severity of principles with indulgence for the individuals. Thus she knew well how to repair scandal without ever occasioning it, to turn the confusion of sinners to the good of their souls, and to draw from evil itself a subject of edification for all her children. Under this beautiful and admirable discipline, every thing proceeded with decency, order and justice. Sacramental confession, instituted by Christ, always goes first; public confession, established by the Church, sometimes follows, but never precedes; the one always indispensable regulates the other, which is but auxiliary. The former, of divine creation, has subsisted and will subsist in all times; the latter, of ecclesiastical origin, after having obtained for some ages, has been discontinued by the same canonical authority, by which it had been instituted.

Such are the notions that we must form of public confession, if we would not attribute to the primitive Church a discipline unworthy of it. Good sense suggests them, as much as it forbids the incorrect notions of our adversaries. Perhaps they may be disposed to contradict this theory: let them however for a moment suspend their attack: there are no reasons so plausible, I am aware, as to be entirely sheltered from exception; but it is in vain to cavil; they must surrender to facts, which are of their own nature irrevocably inflexible.

3. We will proceed therefore to authorities, and in support of our argumentation we will shew, by positive and cotemporary testimonies, that sacramental confession did actually precede public confession. It would be unreasonable to require that all the Fathers, who have exhorted sinners to undergo the shame of this publicity, should have recommended secret confession as a necessary prelude. What need is there of mentioning a custom, when it is established, known, and universally followed in

have been detected by other means, for fear of occasioning their death by the conviction of their crime: they have ordained that such women should be kept among the *consistentes*, and should not communicate till they have completed the time of their penance." St. Basil II. Ep. Canon. to Amphilocheus. Can. XXXIV.

practice? In such circumstances the thing speaks for itself, and follows of course. For this reason, supposing that, according to the doctrine of the Church, sacramental confession was to precede, and that, according to invariable custom, it actually did precede the other, it is very plain that the Fathers, when urging sinners to that which was extraordinary and more painful, would not have spoken of the other, which was much less so, and to which no one generally speaking refused to submit. But what would be indeed most strange and inconceivable, would be that, private confession not being known or customary, some Fathers should have testified that it was known and customary, that it always had been so, must be so, and must serve as a guide for public confession. Yet this is what some of the most celebrated Fathers have done, as you shall now see. "Observe what the divine Scripture teaches, that we must not inwardly conceal our sins. For, as those whose stomach is overloaded with indigestible food, and humors, if they vomit, are instantly relieved; so they, who have sinned, if they hide and retain their sins (are not these secret crimes?) within their breast, are grievously tormented: but if the sinner becomes his own accuser, while he does this, he discharges the cause of all his malady. Only let him carefully consider, to whom he should confess his sin; what is the character of the physician; if he be one who will be weak with the weak, who will weep with the sorrowful, and who understands the discipline of condolence and fellow-feeling."¹ Here let us make a pause: we cannot but discover here the private confession of all, even the most secret sins: Origen describes it exactly and minutely. He does not mention it as a remedy of his own invention, which he would have made use of, if the custom had till then been unknown. On the contrary, what he says supposes the practice of it to have been general among the faithful and the priests; among the faithful, because he recommends to them the choice of a proper director, and indirectly blames those, who go to the first that offers; among the priests, because he marks out in them a diversity of capacity and talents,

¹ Origen Homil. II. in Psal. XXXVII. T. II. p. 688. Edit. Bened. Paris, 1733.

and upon this diversity grounds the circumspection that ought to be used in making a choice. Where preferences take place, there necessarily must be many to choose from. Thus all the priests, or the greater part, heard confessions, some better than others. He wishes the penitents to inform themselves exactly of these latter, and apply to the most capable. The faithful were therefore accustomed to confess their sins in private, and the priest to receive their confession.

That these private confessions, preceded public confessions, the words immediately following the foregoing passage shall inform you. "So that," continues Origen, "when his skill shall be known, and his pity felt you may follow what he should advise. Should he think your disease to be such, that it should be declared in the assembly of the faithful, whereby others may be edified, and yourself easily reformed; this must be done with much deliberation and the skilful advice of the physician." Let us say therefore that the penitent discovers first of all the state of his soul to his director, and that the remedy is in the hand and at the disposal of the latter. He probes and examines the wound, if he judges that the nature of the disorder requires publicity, he commands it. Therefore, confession made to the priest here precedes that, which it might be proper to make in public; and in the first it is determined whether the second shall take place. Observe that there is no question here of any canonical or notorious crime, but the question is of a secret malady of the soul; of an internal languor which escapes every eye, and which only comes to the knowledge of the director, by the confidential communication of the penitent in private. Therefore, the most secret faults were not sometimes less liable to be divulged. What information is contained in these few words of Origen! The public confession of secret faults; public confession preceded and regulated by sacramental confession; the established custom among the faithful of confessing in private, and among the priests of receiving the confessions: all these points are comprised in this valuable passage of the third cen-

tury; and to find them there, it will be sufficient to read the passage attentively.

Let it not be said that Origen does not extend confession to every fault, and that he confines it to one sin more oppressive than the others. The first part of the passage is directly contrary to this supposition; and in order that not a shadow of doubt may remain respecting his doctrine, join to what you have just read, these words, which are also his: "If we discover *our sins*, not only to God, but to those also who may apply a remedy to our wounds and iniquities, our sins will be effaced by Him who said: I have blotted out thy iniquities as a cloud, and thy sins as a mist. *Isaias, c. xlv. v. 22.*"¹ This learned man, therefore, subjected all sins to confession, and declared that on this condition God pardoned them by the instrumentality of his minister.

The stern and unrelenting Novatus became indignant, when he saw that they were admitted to communion, who having fallen in the persecution of Decius, seven or eight months before, had afterwards shewn sincere repentance. He insisted that crimes so enormous could not be absolved upon earth, and that they must be left to the mercy of God. The Church, alarmed at his errors and his schism, thought it necessary, in order to put an end to them, or at least to check their progress, to augment the severity of her discipline: she assigned four degrees to the canonical course of penance, and prolonged the duration of each degree. Moreover, "The bishops of the Churches added to the Canon, that in each Church a priest should preside over the administration of penance, and that all those who fell after baptism, should deposit with him the confession of their sins."² "They chose for penitentiary," says another historian, "a priest of excellent reputation, known for his prudence, and fidelity in keeping secrets."³ What does this mean? And how comes it that this last quality is required, if they were only bound to confess to him their public crimes? Secret sins, therefore, were equally

¹ Hom. XVII. on St. Luke. ² Socrates, Hist. B. V. C. XIX. ³ Sozomen, B VII. C. XIV.

to be declared to him. And as one only priest would not have been sufficient, in a large town or capital city, to hear all the sinners, his ministry was necessarily confined to those, who having committed faults liable to canonical penance, were obliged to address themselves to him, or be sent to him by the priests, whose jurisdiction did not extend so far. Such was the penitentiary instituted about the year 251. Now it happened, about 150 years afterwards, at Constantinople, "that a lady of quality came to confess in full detail all the sins, which she had committed from the time of her baptism. The penitentiary prescribed to her fasts and continual prayers, which, joined to a (public) confession of some sins, would manifest in her worthy fruits of repentance. But this lady going beyond the bounds prescribed, publicly accused herself of another fault, declaring that she had sinned with a deacon. The crime, thus becoming public, gave much scandal, and caused many reports and much ill-feeling towards the clergy; the deacon was dismissed, and the archbishop was induced to abolish the office of penitentiary together with the custom of public accusation."¹

Although the two historians who relate this fact, have not drawn up their narrative with all the precision and method to be desired, they have still cleared up two important points: 1. the necessity and the practice of the private confession of every sin; for Sozomen begins by these words: "As it is absolutely necessary to confess our sins, if we would obtain the pardon of them." And in accordance with it, Socrates relates that "this lady confessed all the sins which she had committed from the time of her baptism." 2. They also shew us that confession made in private to a priest preceded the confession that was made in public. In fact we discover from their recital, that this lady leaves the penitentiary to go, by his order, and accuse herself publicly of some of her faults; but that, hurried on by an indiscreet zeal, she discloses what should have been concealed. Once more then it is proved that private confession always preceded a public manifestation of guilt.

¹ Socrates, Hist. B. V. ch. XIX.

Calvin foolishly triumphs on occasion of this anecdote, and would have it to be understood that the above refers to nothing else but the establishment and abrogation of auricular confession. His object is to make us conclude with him that originating towards the conclusion of the reign of Decius, it was, after a century and a half of existence, entirely abolished at Constantinople under Nectarius. These however are but the fictions of a prejudiced and heated imagination. Calvin might, had he been so disposed, have discovered the existence of confession long before Decius: he might have discovered it in Origen, who was born in 185, and even in St. Basil, where he says: Our fathers “(which, in his time, would reach further back than the third century) have forbidden the making public the adulteries of women, known by confession.” He might have seen that Nectarius abrogated that which had occasioned scandal and might again occasion it, but that auricular confession, made to a penitentiary chosen for his discretion, could not have occasioned the scandal, and never would be productive of any. He might, in fine, have seen that St. Chrysostom,¹ the immediate successor of Nectarius, oftentimes assures the penitents that they are no longer obliged to appear as on a theatre and publicly lay open their conscience, and yet that he urges upon them the use and the necessity of private confession. It is melancholy to have still to refute such miserable cavils; I should have passed them by in silence, had the professors of protestantism let them drop, as, one would imagine, they should be induced to do from good faith and a love of truth.

St. Basil² puts a question; whether it is necessary to declare our bad actions to the world, or merely to some particular persons, and who those persons are; and thus replies. “In the confession of sins, the same method must be observed as in laying open the infirmities of the body. For as these are not rashly communicated to every one, but to those only who understand by what method they may be cured; so the confession of sins

¹ Hom. on the Samaritan woman. Hom. XX. on Genesis. ² In Quest. Brev. Reg. 229. T. II. p. 492, *Edit. Bened. Paris. 1721.*

must be made to such persons as know how to apply a remedy." Is not this equivalent to saying that sinners ought not to go of their own accord to manifest their faults in public, but that they should first address themselves to those whom Jesus Christ has appointed the spiritual physicians of the soul? Of this, the comparison admits no doubt. For, says the holy Father, we must act in the maladies of the soul, as we do in those of the body, discovering them only to those who can remove them. Now a public assembly most assuredly cannot heal a spiritual malady: it is not to such an assembly therefore that we must in the first place make it known: and if ever we do thus manifest it, it must only be done secondarily and according to the direction of our spiritual physician. And to the end that you may be perfectly assured that by spiritual physicians, he means priests only, read what he has written in another canon:¹ "Our sins must of necessity be confessed to those, to whom has been committed the dispensation of the mysteries of God."

St. Augustin, speaking of the sinner in general, addresses to him the following instructions:² "When the sinner shall have passed a severe but medicinal judgment on himself, let him come to the priests, by whom the keys are ministered. Beginning now to be an obedient son, by observing the commands of his mother, he may receive from the ministry of the sacraments the due measure of satisfaction; so that offering up, with devotion and supplication, the sacrifice of a contrite heart, he will not only promote his own salvation, but benefit others by his example. Should this crime be of such a nature, as to cause scandal to others, as well as to be grievous to himself, and the minister judge it to be expedient for the good of the Church, that he should do penance in the presence of many, or of the whole assembly, let him not refuse; let him not resist, and thus, through shame, aggravate a distemper already mortal." You have here in a few words the whole system of the penitential discipline. The sinner commences by going to the priest; he observes his commands and receives from him the due measure of satisfaction

¹ *Ibid. Reg.* 288. p. 516. ² *Hom. L. T. X.* p. 178. Paris, 1614.

which the minister thinks proper to impose : the sinner is not to refuse to submit, even if he be required, by way of reparation of scandal given, to make a public manifestation of his crime. Therefore, even scandalous and notorious offences were not publicly divulged, unless the director thought it advisable : and the confession which was made in private preceded that which was made in public, and this second confession was regulated and determined by the first, which 'Tertullian' had a long time before called *the counsellor of satisfaction*.

St. Leo² expressly prohibited the practice which certain bishops or ecclesiastics had presumed to introduce, *contrary to the apostolical regulation*, of obliging penitents to write out at full length the particular kind of sins they had committed, and read them in public. Having lately understood, that some of you, by an unlawful usurpation, have adopted a practice which tradition does not allow, I am determined by all means to suppress it. I speak of penance, when applied for by the faithful. There shall be no declaration of all kinds of sins, given in writing, and publicly read : for it is enough that the guilt of conscience be made known to the priests alone by a private confession. That confidence, indeed, may be thought deserving of praise, which, on the account of the fear of God, hesitates not to blush before men ; but there are sins, the public disclosure of which must excite fear ; therefore, let this improper practice be put an end to, lest many be kept from the remedies of penance, being ashamed, or dreading, to make known to their enemies such actions, as may expose them to legal punishment. That confession suffices, which is first made to God, and then to the minister, who will offer up prayers for the sins of penitents. And then will more be induced to apply to this remedy, when the secrets of the confessing sinner shall not be divulged in the hearing of the people."

What is it that the sovereign pontiff here blames and prohibits ? It could not be the blind zeal or indiscreet conduct of certain penitents, who of their own accord, had made a public manifestation of their sins : for this voluntary and inordinate zeal of

¹ IV. C. IX. *De Penit.* ² Ep. LXXXIII. *al.* XCI. p. 635, 696. Paris. 1675.

some would not have prevented others from confessing their sins in secret. It was therefore the conduct of certain ecclesiastics, who, contrary to apostolical tradition, presumptuously took upon themselves to induce their penitents to give their sins a publicity till then unheard of. If these ecclesiastics had made a prudent distinction between the sins to be concealed and those to be made public, they would only have been following the practice of that and preceding ages; but they required the public confession of faults without due discrimination, and thus cast terror into their penitents and scared them from the salutary remedy of penance. But it was only to those penitents who applied to them that they could give either their advice or injunction to make this public manifestation; which supposes that the penitents must have made a secret confession of their sins, and that they only told them in public subsequently to the order they had received to that effect. The abuse here condemned by St. Leo furnishes us with an additional proof that private succeeded public confession.

Thus our preceding reasons are justified, and in point of fact it is certain that sacramental and divine confession went before that which had been introduced and admitted in certain cases by ecclesiastical discipline. The eminent and enlightened personages, from whom we learn this, lived in the times when public confession was in use. They could not be ignorant in what manner it was practised under their eyes: their testimonies are therefore unexceptionable and peremptory. It is therefore not to be doubted that public confession depended upon private confession; that the latter generally took place alone, the former never: we cannot therefore suppose public confession without a preceding confession in private, any more than we can conceive an effect without a cause. After this, I ask you, what benefit do our adversaries receive from the holy Fathers who have spoken of public confession, since no one calls it in question? Why do they accumulate so many texts to establish what is not contested? Their object is to bury private and sacramental confession under this collection of passages; but they only establish and confirm it the more, since, every time that public confession is produced,

it is impossible not to understand that confession also which had necessarily gone before and given origin to it; and since, after our proofs, you are compelled to go back from that which is public and seen to that which is hidden and secret, as from an effect to its cause. Still more, if an attempt was made to prove that public confession was absolutely independent of any kind of confession,¹ and that according to the discipline of those times all sinners were of their own movement, without any counsel or direction from either bishop or priests, to divulge in the assembly of the faithful not only scandalous crimes, but also the secret sins he had been so unfortunate as to commit! Up to this time, no one, to the best of my knowledge, has ever been bold enough to make such an attempt; and I leave you to calculate the success that would attend such an enterprise against the plain and positive testimonies of Origen, St. Basil, St. Augustin and Leo the Great, and against the well known fact of Nectarius.

We will now recapitulate the principal allegations of your divines against the apostolicity of the Catholic dogma of confession. 1. Some say, and unceasingly repeat, that the first Christians were never obliged to confess their sins in the ear of the priests, but to declare aloud those sins alone which had given public scandal. Whilst they are producing some positive passages from the writers of the first ages in support of this assertion, I will present them with a few which ought to do something more than embarrass them; they ought to produce an entire change in their sentiments and language. St. Leo,² blaming the practice of those who obliged their penitents to read aloud the list of their sins, opposes to it, as quite sufficient, confession made to a priest alone, and reprobating the presumptuous conduct of such directors, as being contrary to the apostolical canons, clearly shews that private confession was quite in conformity

¹ I am far from admitting that, should such an independence be established, private confession would be proved to have had no existence in the first ages: that would not be true: it is however most evidently true that private confession is always discoverable in the primitive Church, when once it is demonstrated that public confession depended upon it and necessarily supposed it. ² Ep. to the bishops of Camp.

with them. Hear St. Jerome:¹ “If the serpent, the devil, secretly bite a man, and thus infect him with the poison of sin, and this man shall remain silent, and not do penance, nor be willing to make known his wound to his brother and master; the master who has a tongue that can heal, will not be able easily to be of service to him. For if the ailing man be ashamed to open his case to the physician, no cure can be expected: for medicine does not cure that which it knows nothing of. *Quod enim ignorat, medicina non curat.*”

“If your bonds are not yet broken, surrender yourselves to the disciples of Jesus Christ; they are ready to set you free by the power they have received from our Saviour. And what are the sinners who must have recourse to their ministry? They are those whose vices were concealed, and whose sins were not subjected to public penance. One is enchained by avarice, another by fornication, this by drunkenness, the other by a vain ambition. There are some who injure their neighbors and the poor, by taking or withholding from them what belongs to them; others accumulate usury on usury, in fine, we all labor under our respective vices; we all stand in need of being healed by our Saviour, and of the assistance of his ministers, that we may be freed from the captivity of the devils.”²

“God sees into the hearts of all men,” says St. Cyprian,³ “and he will judge not their actions only, but their words and thoughts, viewing the most hidden conceptions of the mind. Hence, though some of these persons be remarkable for their faith and the fear of God, and have not been guilty of the crime of sacrificing to idols, nor of surrendering the holy scriptures; yet if the thought of doing it have entered their mind, this they confess with grief and without disguise, before the priests of God, unburdening the conscience, and seeking a salutary remedy, however small and pardonable their failing may have been. God, they know, will not be mocked. Having mentioned other such sins not greatly criminal, he adds, “The fault is less, but the

¹ Comment. on Ch. X. of Eccles. ² St. Athan. T. 1. p. 990. ³ *De Lapsis*, p. 134. Oxon. 1682.

conscience is not clear. Pardon may more easily be obtained: still there is guilt, and let not the sinner cease from doing penance, lest, what before was small, be aggravated by neglect. All, my brethren, must confess their fault, while he that has offended enjoys life: while his confession can be received, and while the satisfaction and pardon imparted by the priests are acceptable before God." These offences, though confined to the breast, are still punishable; thoughts may render us criminal, and they must be confessed whilst the offender enjoys life, and while the pardon imparted by the priest can be applied to him. Now your teachers maintain that actions alone were cognizable in the public confession; therefore, mere thoughts and criminal intentions, which can give no scandal, could only be declared in auricular confession; and you see the use and necessity of it in the testimony and doctrine of the primate of Africa.¹

Tertullian,² whom he called his master, had taught the same doctrine before him. Man, said he, is composed of body and of spirit; both came to him from God; each of them may offend God in its own way; the body by action, the spirit by will and desire. He concludes that there is therefore an equal necessity of doing penance for the sins of the body and of the spirit, and even more so of the latter, since the will is the source and origin of every bad action; and he continues: "He who denounces judgment and punishment upon every offence committed by the flesh or the spirit, in fact or in desire, has vouchsafed to promise pardon by penance." Now of this penance Tertullian makes confession a component and conspicuous part; and as confession, according to the acknowledgment of your divines, cannot be public for criminal thoughts, that are always devoid of scandal, the confession understood by Tertullian must have been private and sacramental.

¹ See moreover, on the necessity and the usage of confessing secret sins, the same St. Cyprian, *Lib. de Lapsis*, p. 202, edit. Rigalt.; canon IX. of the council of Neocesarea; canon LXXVI. of the council of Elvira; St. Basil, Ep. III. to Amphil; canon LXI. on stealing; St. Gregory of Nyssa, in his Ep. to bishop Letolus, on stealing and other secret crimes, T. I. p. 950; and other authorities quoted in the *Histoire de la confess. auric.*, par. Jac. Boileau. ² *Lib. de Penit.*, c. IV. et. IX.

“ Whilst we are in this world ” wrote St. Clement,¹ “ let us sincerely repent of ALL the evils we have done in the flesh. For when once we leave this world, there is no more confession, no more penance.” Observe that this apostolical man requires confession and penance for ALL the evil committed: he makes no exception of any sins, he takes in secret sins, which are always the most numerous, for in the commission of sin, we avoid as much as possible the eye of man. Here then we have auricular confession At the end of the first century. If you are desirous of seeing it still earlier, open the Acts of the apostles.² “ And many of them that believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds,” that is to say, their SINS, as the Syriac version renders it. Was this confession made in public or in private? Judge, Sir, according to the principle of your teachers, by the known quality of one of the sins declared to the apostle, the domestic and private reading of books of magic.

2. Others pretend that, according to the belief of the primitive Church, it was sufficient to confess to God alone, without having recourse to his ministers. Where are they to find in antiquity the proof for such an assertion, while the great lights of antiquity teach precisely the opposite doctrine? The following testimonies shall enable you to form some judgment on the subject. “ There is yet a more severe and arduous pardon of sins by penance, when the sinner washes his couch with his tears, and when he blushes not to disclose his sin to the priest of the Lord, and seek a remedy.”³

“ Let us examine our conscience to see whether our bonds are broken: if they are not broken, approach to the disciples of Jesus Christ, who are at your call and ready to unbind you by virtue of the power they have received from our Saviour: whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven, &c.”⁴

“ NECESSARILY, our sins must be confessed to those, to whom

¹ Ep. to Corinth. fragm. published by Cotelier. ² Ch. xix. 18. ³ Origen, Hom. II. in Levit. Tom. II. p. 191. Edit. Bened. Paris 1733. ⁴ St. Athanasius, T. I. p. 990.

has been committed the dispensation of the mysteries of God.”¹ St. Leo says that there shall be no declaration of all kinds of sins, given in writing and publicly read: for it is enough that the guilt of conscience be made known to the priest alone by a private confession.” And again: “That confession suffices, which is first made to God and then to his minister.”² St. Ambrose exhorted his people not to put off repentance and penance till death. “We ought,” said he,³ “to abstain from henceforward from every vice, because we know not whether we shall then be able to confess to God and to the priest.” It is indeed true that in our times those have appeared who would have nothing to do with the ministry of the priests, under the pretext that, from deference to the Supreme Majesty, they recognized in God alone the power to forgive sin. Let the reformation read and retract: “But on the contrary none do a greater injury to heaven than those who would abrogate its ordinances and annul the commission it has given. For, our Saviour having said: Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven; whose sins you shall retain they are retained; which of the two honors him the most, he who obeys his orders, or he who resists it? But the Church shews itself obedient; whether it binds or looses sins.”⁴

“Ye have been guilty of this sin (adultery;) do such penance as is done in the Church, that the Church may pray for you. Let no one say; I do it secretly; I do it before God; he knows my heart, and will pardon me. Was it then said without reason, what you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven? Were the keys then given to the Church to no purpose? This would be frustrating the Gospel and the words of Christ..... Beg, therefore, the priest to come to you (he is addressing a sick person) and open to him your conscience. Be not seduced by the reveries of those superstitious ones who would persuade you that confession made to God, of which the priest knows nothing, will save you. Undoubtedly we ought frequently to be acknowledging ourselves guilty before God; this we do not deny; but we

¹ S. Basil. *In Quæst. brev. Reg.* 288. ² Ep. CXXXVI. al LXXX. *ad Episc. Campaniæ.* ³ *Ibid.* II. *de Penit.* C. VIII. ⁴ *Ibid.* Lib. I. C. II.

tell you, and sound doctrine teaches you, that, you have need of the salutary sentence of the priest, which is to intervene between you and your God."¹

3. Our adversaries, with these testimonies before them, being unable to deny the existence of private confession in times past, entrench themselves in the assertion that the faithful of those times did not believe themselves bound to confess all their sins in the minute and rigorous manner now prevailing with us. It remains to be seen whether they will be more successful in this their third and last allegation. In the first place, the evidence just brought forward establishes the confession of sins, without saying a word about a selection or exception of any; the Fathers exhort to the confession of sins and inculcate the necessity of declaring them to the priests. Upon what ground are our adversaries authorized to exclude any, or rather, perhaps, the greater part! What are the sins to be confessed to the priest; what, to God alone? Is it not a dangerous and blameable presumption, in an affair so intimately connected with salvation, to make arbitrary exceptions, where the Fathers have made none?

Protestants sometimes ask us to produce authorities for the exact confession of every sin; but, assuredly, it is for them to bring forward express authorities in favor of the selection and exception of sins to be confessed. We however are so rich in proofs that we willingly comply even with their unreasonable demands. In an author of the first ages,² we read these words addressed to the bishops and priests: "Do not pronounce the same judgment on every sin; let *each* have its own. Form your judgment with much prudence respecting *every* offence, whether great or small." To prescribe an appropriate judgment for all and each of the offences, whether great or small, is evidently to subject them, without any exception, to the knowledge of the priest, and consequently, to sacerdotal confession.

As, in the treatment of corporeal maladies, the art of medicine has but one object—the recovery of the patient, but greatly va-

¹ In the works of St. Augustin, on visiting the sick. ² St. Gregory of Nyssa
Can. Ep. to the Bish. of Mytelene.

ries in the remedies applied (for the remedies and treatment vary according to the disorder) so, in the maladies of the soul, as various souls are variously affected, so appropriate remedies must be, applied." If the director is to vary his prescriptions according to the difference and variety of sins and sinners, it is clear that the various sins must be known to him, and consequently discovered by the confession of the penitents.

Look upon a priest as a father, confide to him your troubles and afflictions. Confidently open to him your secret soul. Discover to him the secrets of your conscience, as hidden wounds are discovered to the physician. He, in his turn, will consult for your honor and your health."¹ This passage speaks for itself. We conceal none of our bodily infirmities from the physician, not even those that are the most secret; therefore, we must not conceal any of our spiritual infirmities, however hidden, from our spiritual physician, but must make an entire and universal declaration of them to the priest.

If the sinner, as becomes him, would use the aid of his conscience, and hasten to confess his crimes, and disclose his ulcer to the physician, who may heal and not reproach, and receive remedies from him; if he would speak to him alone, without the privity of any one, and with care lay all before him, easily would he amend his failings; for, the confession of sins is the absolution of crimes."²

St. Ambrose says, "If you aspire to be justified, acknowledge your crime. The bond of iniquity is broken by an humble confession of sins."³

St. Paulinus, the author of the life of this great bishop, writes of him that, "When any one came to declare to him his sins in confession, he wept to such a degree as to make his penitent weep with him. He seemed as if he himself had fallen with those that fell. He never spoke of the crimes confessed to him, save only to God, whose clemency he implored in behalf of the sinner."

What then," exclaimed St. Pacian,⁴ "doest thou who deceivest

¹ Idem, On the woman caught in adultery. ² St. Chrysostom, Hom. XX. On Gen. ³ Lib. II. De penit. ⁴ Paræn. ad penit.

the minister? Who either leavest him in ignorance, or confoundest his judgment by half communications? I entreat you, brethren, by that Lord whom no concealments can deceive, to cease from disguising a wounded conscience. A diseased man, if possessed of sense, hides not his wounds however secret they may be, though the knife or fire should be applied.—And shall a sinner be afraid to purchase by present shame, eternal life?" Is this the language of your ministers? How would it sound from your pulpits?

Having heard, as his duty requires, the various qualities of sins, he understands who should be bound and who should be loosed."¹ It is plain that the priest cannot know the different quality of sins, except by the entire and exact declaration of the penitent; and as he does not and cannot exercise his ministry without this exact knowledge, we may infer from it the ancient usage and acknowledged necessity of confessing every sin. You will draw the same inference from the following words of St. Augustin:² "Be sorrowful, therefore, before confession: after it, be glad; for now thou shalt be healed. Thy conscience had collected matter; the imposthume had swelled; it pained thee; it allowed thee no rest. The physician applies the fomentation of advice; he has recourse when the evil requires it to the knife. Do thou embrace the hand; confess; and in this confession may *all* that is foul be cleared away. Now rejoice, and be glad; what remains, will with ease be cured." This metaphor is clear and expressive. Sins are the poison and corruption of our ulcerated conscience, which is perfectly cleared by confession. One single sin concealed would still keep corruption in the wound. Every sin therefore must be confessed, that the whole of the matter may be drawn away, and the cure be certain. By adding to these testimonies those of St. Leo, St. Gregory the Great, &c., I should merely fatigue your attention on a subject already sufficiently established; you have heard sufficient to conclude that according to the doctrine and belief of the first ages, all sins were

¹ Hieron. Com. in C. XVI. Matth. ² *Enarrat.* in Psal. LXVI.

submitted without discrimination to the power of the keys, and that no mortal or serious offence could be withheld from the knowledge of the spiritual judge.

Read over again, if you please, the passages I have just cited against this third allegation. It is very important to observe that they are not less decisive against the two first. In fact, there is not one, which does not shew the use and the necessity of the auricular and sacramental confession of all our sins. Therefore, confession made to God alone has never been regarded by antiquity as sufficient, and the second allegation of protestants is false. Therefore, again, besides the public confession of certain scandalous prevarications, there was a necessity of confessing to the bishop or the priest even the most secret faults; and the first allegation is equally refuted by the same proof. I have separately refuted both of them by direct authorities; join to them the passages adduced against the third allegation, and you will find that they will thus derive additional strength and complete the particular proofs. It is the property of truth always to gain by examination; under whatever point of view you examine confession in antiquity, the proofs start up in multitudes on every side to justify our belief; and the Fathers have never said any thing upon confession, which does not concur in confirming the Catholic doctrine. You have just seen it clearly taught by an unbroken and universal tradition reaching to the days of the apostles; we have found it also in the Holy Scriptures, if not in precise terms, at least by immediate and certain deductions; it is therefore evidently traced in both the deposits of Revelation, and you can no longer doubt that the doctrine of the Catholic Church upon confession has been revealed by Christ himself.

From these incontestable principles is derived an alarming consequence, which I cannot conceal from you. If confession requiring the enumeration of all the faults known to us, be the exclusive means ordained by Christ for obtaining forgiveness, as I believe you to be now convinced, in what a deplorable situation are you, Sir: in what a situation are those who have thrown aside this prescribed and necessary means! How do they ex-

pect the forgiveness of their sins? A society of impeccable beings standing in no need of confession might undoubtedly have rejected it; or rather it never would have been ordained for them. But such a society belongs not to this world, and its frail and degenerate inhabitants; we all sin, repentance is our indispensable resource and universal refuge. It requires, under the evangelical dispensation, the humiliating and salutary acknowledgment of all our sins; such is the will of the Divine Legislator, such the condition to which he attaches the promised pardon; and yet men have been so blind to their interests as to disregard and reject it! They thought of nothing but cavilling at that which they had determined to desert, and they saw not, that by suppressing the necessity of confessing every sin, they deprived themselves of a resource absolutely indispensable! They saw not, that by a terrible judgment of heaven, they condemned themselves to appear before the last awful tribunal, covered with faults unforgiven! Were there not any other evil in the reformation, I would on this account alone abandon it. Never could it make me impeccable; it should therefore allow me to have recourse to that necessary means of recovering grace, a means which it will not employ. It cannot secure me from inevitable rocks; it should therefore allow me to seize upon the only plank that remains after the shipwreck of innocence. In vain does it repeat to me: Confess to God all your sins; and, if you please, to the priest, also those which trouble you the most; and then live or die in tranquillity and peace." What can this flattering illusion avail me? Jesus Christ commands me to confess them all to his minister. I read this injunction in his testament; I hear it re-echoed from mouth to mouth, in the tradition of every age. What is the reformation, and what am I, to change the ordinance of my God and his Christ? His revelation is invariable: as it was given, so must it be received; we must conform to it, without retrenchment or alteration; and since God chooses to pardon only those sins that are confessed to his ministers, the reformation is equally bound with myself to obey, and

to comply with the condition he has been pleased to fix, or to renounce the hopes of forgiveness.¹

“All these proofs, you will say, appear solid and unquestionable. But, if you compel us to prove the theory of your confession, you will dispense with us at least from adopting it in practice, such as it prevails in your Church at the present time. To speak for myself, I have lived among you, and have watched the administration of your sacraments. I have seen Catholics at certain times of the year crowding round the tribunals of penance, but with little or no preparation: I have seen the confessors lend a ready ear to their confessions, and almost without remonstrance, advice, trial or delay, confer their absolutions. Watching the result of such proceedings, I have found these penitents of the moment returning immediately, from the tribunal of penance and from the sacred table, to the same licentious manner of life, and resuming their old habits; sinning and repenting by turns, vibrating between the world and God, and God and the world, and thus spending their days in a perpetual and ridiculous circle of worldliness and Christianity, of remorse and pleasures, of ephemeral conversions and sudden relapses. From these observations I have been led to conclude that your facility in giving absolution was but an encouragement to sin the more: whereas we consider that the forgiveness of sin is not so easily obtained: we consider that to regain the favor of heaven

¹ What shall we say then of that multitude of protestants, who have died, and who daily do die without confession, and without even knowing that Christ has attached to it the remission of sins? Sincerity, and involuntary and invincible ignorance are great titles to the divine mercy, and can obtain from heaven such a disposition as would induce them cheerfully to recur to confession, if its necessity were known to them. This kind of implied willingness, this indirect preparation, this desire, ill expressed but intelligible to God, joined to a repentance animated by a perfect charity, would supply, it is true, for an actual confession of every sin. We should be glad to suppose this high degree of contrition and love in all those who die without the helps and the graces of the sacrament. Unfortunately we cannot dissemble that it is very-rare, although it is the only resource that we know of, even for invincible ignorance. Do you, therefore, who are now rescued from such ignorance, pray with trembling, but not without hope, for your countrymen, your departed ancestors; and being yourself better instructed, make use of the means which they were not privileged to know.

long continued exertions are necessary, to gain the mastery over our vicious inclinations and to eradicate the prevailing passion, and that till such efforts are made we never flatter ourselves that we are absolved by God. From all this I conclude, that, although you may be more exact than we are in theory, we certainly surpass you in practice."

I have hitherto been only discussing principles, and you reply to me by abuses in practice. Far be it from me to defend the abuses you have so justly held up to reprobation. I know that they are unfortunately but too true in some countries, in these days of darkness, and I condemn them more emphatically than you do. It would not be difficult to assign the causes of these lamentable and fatal abuses, if this were the place for it. There does however exist, even at the present day, (I speak more particularly of France and England,) a great number of enlightened confessors, nurtured in the maxims of the holy Fathers, instructed in the true principles and the rules of ancient discipline; a great number of prudent directors, careful to sound the state of the conscience, and to acquire a moral certainty of the sincerity of the repentance, and who are particularly careful not to endanger their own salvation and that of their penitents by a blind precipitation, in pronouncing an undeserved and consequently a null sentence of absolution. Such are the priests that penitents choose for their guides, when they are sincerely desirous of working out their salvation and returning to God. Such also are the priests whom you ought to produce as examples, if you would wish to draw a fair comparison between the belief and practice of your Church and ours. Suppose, therefore, two persons desiring to return to God; one belongs to the Church of England, the other to the Catholic Church. How will the former set about the work? After reviewing, in the bitterness of his soul, the long continued disorders of his life, he will humble himself before God, ask forgiveness, and pray for grace to walk henceforward in his law. So far every thing goes on properly, and cannot but be praised and approved. Again, he will assist more frequently at the public service of his parish, will be more dis-

creet in his discourse and actions, and will apply himself to pious reading, if he is in easy circumstances, he will relieve the poor, and become a member of some benevolent society; all which is assuredly most praiseworthy. He would willingly, I dare say, have recourse to works of penance; but he has never been taught to consider them as necessary: he therefore rejects them, and lives at his ease. If he still permits himself some of those indulgences which are considered as excusable in human weakness, he has at least broken the course of his former iniquities, and begun a more edifying life. From this time he will soon persuade himself that he has regained the favor of heaven. And here the question must be put; whence does he acquire this conviction? and what assurance has he that he is pardoned? He has no other assurance than that of his own judgment, and the testimony he bears to himself. Would to God that this judgment was not erroneous, and that this testimony was not a pure illusion.¹

The Catholic penitent commences like yours, but goes much further. He knows that he stands in need of a guide, and accordingly chooses one. He immediately feels that in the minister of God he has found a compassionate friend and a tender parent. He learns from him what he must do to repair such or such an evil, and to restore all that belongs not to him, to break off an attachment or an evil habit, to fly the occasion of sin, &c. He receives a new plan of conduct, a course of prayers, of meditations, of alms and charitable works. Some time is spent in these exercises; he returns to his director, who enquires into the actual state of his soul, applauds his efforts, encourages him by the great motives of religion and the examples that he places

¹ I have seen in your Church and in the numerous sects into which it is divided, a multitude of persons estimable, upright, and honorably attached to their word. But the ancient island of Saints no longer presents, amongst its reformed inhabitants, either penitents in the true meaning of the word, or Christians truly pious and devout, and full of ardor for heaven, and of contempt for the world. Remember that this was not the case before your religious revolution.

Christianity changes not its spirit by age, or rather it grows not old like us. Wherever it subsists, it is the same, and shews itself by the same effects. Tell me therefore, how comes it that among those who adhere to your reformation, there are found so many good kind of men and so few true Christians?

before his eyes, and continues to pray daily for him; if he sends him back again, it is to try him still more. When he judges him sufficiently disposed, he exhorts him to redouble his fervor at the approach of his reconciliation, that he may obtain by humble prayer the ratification in heaven of that sentence of pardon, which will be pronounced over him on earth: the moment being come, he solemnly pronounces the desired absolution; then consolation and peace re-enter the conscience of the penitent, in place of the weight which had hitherto oppressed it. He finds himself quite another man. But might not this be an illusion? If it could be so, at least it would not proceed from himself. He has simply obeyed the person, whom Providence had given him as a guide, and to whom he knows that Jesus Christ has said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven." Can there be in this world a hope better founded than his? If it does not entirely exclude that fear and trembling, which always accompanies here below, even in the just, the great work of salvation, it moderates and suspends it by a filial confidence. But, being absolved and reconciled, will he not fall again into his former sins? He is always frail, because he is man. He may therefore experience relapses, perhaps even grievous ones, but they will be less frequent, and of shorter duration; he will hasten to rise again by means of the same assistance. By degrees he will gain the mastery: the frequent and discreet use of the sacraments will complete his victory over himself, and will elevate him to that degree of perfection, of which our feeble nature is susceptible.

Judge, now Sir, between the two conversions, of which I have presented a faithful sketch. Which of these two penitents would you wish to resemble? Which appears to you more certainly placed in the way to life? Do you think that it costs less in the Catholic Church than it does in yours, to be truly penitent? Let us be candid. What do you require for the pardon of sins? You require of the sinner to repent before God, to refrain from sin for the time to come, and to do good to the best of his power; and you require no more. Now we require this also. With us repentance is the first of all conditions, even indispensable, never



to be supplied by any other. "It is only tears and repentance that efface sins; neither angels nor archangels could do it. The Saviour himself does not pardon us, if we be not penitent."¹ Such has been the constant doctrine of the Church from its origin down to our days. But repentance the only condition in the reformation, is with us the first and principal, but not the only one. It ought to conduct us to the tribunal of confession, and there lead us to undergo the humiliating shame of discovering the baseness of our thoughts and the indignity of our actions. Even then we are not pardoned; we must be proved, and shew by our efforts to surmount our evil inclinations, that we are really desirous of changing our conduct: we must moreover expiate, to the best of our power, the sins and errors of our life, and fulfil in fine with this view the penitential exercises, which are prescribed to us to satisfy the divine justice.

¹ St. Ambrose *ep. to Theod.*

LETTER XII.

Satisfaction.

“SATISFY divine justice! What! Sir, has not Jesus Christ, our Mediator, made abundant satisfaction for us all? And can you, without derogating from the infinite merit of his redemption, require man to add any thing of his own?”

Such are the sentiments I seem to hear you express. They are the sentiments and doctrine of all your theologians and of the reformation in general, but not of revelation. By revelation we are taught that the man, who seeks for happiness here below by shaking off the yoke of the law and by preferring his own will to the will of his Creator, deserves to be miserable both in this transitory life, and in life eternal, for his rebellious ingratitude to the infinite majesty of God; by it we are taught that, abandoned to himself, the sinner (and all mankind are sinners) incapable of rendering to God a sufficient compensation, would have been condemned to an everlasting punishment; that Jesus Christ, moved with love and compassion for his criminal creatures who were fallen, and yet were capable of rising again to their original destiny, voluntarily offered himself for them to the divine justice as a satisfaction which they were not able to pay; that, by the infinite price of his blood, he could without doubt have atoned at once both for the eternal and temporal punishments, which they had deserved; but that, delivering them from the first, from which they could not deliver themselves, he has been pleased to leave them to undergo the second, equally compatible with their nature and with the felicity of heaven; that thus, from the first sinner to the last of his children, all, even those who have been pardoned, have undergone or shall undergo, temporal punishments either in this world or in the next.

Sometimes God inflicts these punishments upon us, either di-

rectly by himself, or by his ministers. Moses obtains the pardon of his incredulity, and yet is condemned to expiate it by a premature death; he is to see the promised land from a distance, and never to enter it. Nathan declares to David that his sin is forgiven him, and that he shall not die; and yet, because he has caused the enemies of God to blaspheme, because he has despised the Lord, and sinned with the wife of Urias, he shall mourn the loss of his son, and spend his days in the tears and lamentations of repentance.

Sometimes sinners inflict these temporal punishments upon themselves. Under the law as well as under the gospel, true penitents have avenged upon themselves, by voluntary chastisements, the sins they had committed. Job, for having sinned in words, perpetually reproached himself, and did penance in ashes; David, Achab, the king of Niniveh, did penance in sackcloth and ashes; St. Paul¹ ceased not to bring his body into subjection and to afflict it, in order, as he said, to fill up what was wanting of the sufferings of Christ; and innumerable penitents of all ages have, for the expiation of sins long before pardoned, peopled solitudes and monasteries, and lived a life of privations and austerities.

More frequently however, it is the Church which, in the tribunal of penance, to prevent the defect of our spontaneous mortifications, imposes salutary and sacramental penances, whether they precede or follow the absolution, which she grants. It is not necessary here to describe the canonical penances consisting of those severe and long courses to which sinners were successively subjected before their reconciliation: with the edifying history of these you must be well acquainted. You know also that afterwards, to accommodate herself to the tepidity and the

¹ Colos. ch. I. v. 24. "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh for his body, which is the Church." What did St. Paul fill up in his flesh? Temporal punishments. Now, what he filled up was wanting, as he expresses it, of the sufferings of Christ. The temporal punishment of sin was therefore wanting, to fill up afterwards; and Jesus Christ did not intend to include them in his own sufferings, or consequently to exempt from them his mystical body, which is his Church.

ever increasing weakness of her children, the Church found herself compelled to relax by little and little the rigors of her ancient discipline. And yet, in her greatest relaxations never does she grant absolution without requiring some satisfactory work, more or less, to be performed by the penitent; so that, from the origin of christianity to our days, the constant practice of the Church supposes this belief universal, that after our faults are pardoned in heaven there still remains to be endured, on our part, a temporal expiation.

God himself takes care to instruct us upon this great and useful truth: on some occasions he instils it into us by the signal chastisements with which he visits the earth, whether it be that he raises up nation against nation and lays kingdoms waste with fire and sword, or that he destroys whole generations by pestilence and famine. We cannot doubt that these are the scourges of an irritated God, who occasionally visits the impenitent with the punishments of time as well as of eternity, while he separates these two punishments in favor of reconciled penitents whom he calls to himself, after having chastised them for a short time, by involving them in the general catastrophe.¹ But without departing from the ordinary course of his providence, is not the temporal chastisement occasioned by our disobedience most sensible in the consequences of original sin? Baptism for ever effaces from our souls the stain of this sin, and yet it leaves us still a prey to infirmities, sufferings, death, and to every temporal punishment to which the human race has been condemned since the fall of our first parents. Is not this temporal punishment daily experienced in the pains and crosses we daily experience, even after our offences have been pardoned for another world? Is there a day of our lives in which we are not all of us, whether actual sinners or reconciled penitents, exposed to the shafts of malice hatred and calumny; or to the pursuits of injustice, the vexation of disappointed hopes, of betrayed con-

¹ The most alarming and unequivocal sign of depravation is when nations are visited with some heavy calamity, and perceive not the hand that chastises them. Then it is that they grow worse under the scourge and draw down more terrible punishments upon their blind impenitence.

fidence and of hollow friendship; or to the capricious and contemptuous treatment of our superiors to the slights or rivalry of our equals, and to the infidelities of our servants? Is there a day in which we are not exposed to various contrarieties and accidents, and to miseries and mortifications of every kind? Is there a day in which we have not to suffer, in some way or other, not only in our own health and fortune, but also in the health, fortune and person of our friends, neighbors, relatives and acquaintance? Are we to suppose that all these miseries and trials, whether great or little, befall us without cause, end, or reason? So the generality of men seem to suppose. You hear them talking of their ill-luck, or misfortune pursuing them, of ill-omened days, of fate, &c. &c., and thus attributing to imaginary beings the real misfortunes they experience. But we, believing in a Providence of infinite wisdom and power, know that nothing happens by chance; we know that nothing happens without its pleasure or permission, that the disposition of the smallest and most trifling events costs it no more than the organization of the multitude of insects imperceptible to the eye, and that if it has thickly scattered thorns in the path of life, the reason is because we began our career with disobedience and crime. An infuriated man heaped curses and execrations upon David: "Let him alone," said the royal penitent to the warriors around him who were anxious to avenge his insulted majesty, "let him alone that he may curse as the Lord hath bidden him; perhaps the Lord may look upon my affliction, and the Lord may render me good for the cursing of this day."¹ Let us learn from this to form a proper judgment of whatever misfortunes may befall us in this world, even after being absolved and pardoned in the other: let us learn that our fellow creatures are often employed by the Almighty as the instruments of punishment, and that whatever injures or incommodes us each day of our existence is sent us from heaven in punishment of the sins we have committed, or of the sin we contracted at our birth; and let us no longer doubt that all these trials are mercifully designed to be so

¹II. B. of Kings, xvi. II, 11.

many means of expiating our faults.¹ Thus the manifest order of God's providence over us, the sentiment of all true penitents both before and since Jesus Christ, the doctrine of the apostles, the doctrine also of the Church so vigorously inculcated in her discipline, all concur to convince us that our crimes deserve the punishments of eternity and also of time; that our Saviour, whilst he preserves us from the former, does not exempt us from the latter, and that, in dying for us, he did not in any respect propose to dispense with us from satisfying, as far as we are able, the justice of his Father.

Who would presume here to dispute the point with our Saviour, and ask him, why, being able to remit the whole debt, he has left some part of it to be payed by ourselves? By his death, he has averted an otherwise inevitable and endless punishment; for this, our fullest gratitude is due, and it is our duty also to believe, although we may not be able to understand it, that, if he has put apparent bounds to his benefits, he has done so for our greater advantage. But who does not satisfactorily discover this motive, and perceive, in the punishments he still reserves for us to suffer, a design of mercy and compassion for man? Had he emancipated us from every personal satisfaction for sin, we should have had a less idea of its enormity, should have thought

¹ If we only knew how to accept our daily sufferings and trials and bear them with patient resignation, we should perform a penance preferable to any thing we could impose upon ourselves in this world. Our daily trials are not our choice, but are portioned out to us by God himself, who has fixed the time and country in which we are born, the parents who give us birth, the circumstances and relations in which we are and the social sphere in which we move. Whatever befalls us, is by the disposition or permission of Providence. If things fall out according to our wishes, let us be thankful; if otherwise, let us submit in a penitential spirit: thus shall we always walk in the presence and under the direction of God: instead of the inquietudes, murmurs, and chagrin which others experience to no other purpose than to the increase of their sufferings and their sins, we shall always remain calm and resigned. Thus piety would be to our interest and advantage in this world, putting out of the question the felicity of the next.

How many opportunities do we daily let slip of appeasing the wrath of heaven! It should be our never-failing practice to beg every morning the grace to accept the contradictions of the day in the spirit of penance, and as some expiation of the multiplied sins and imperfections of our lives past.

less of its fatal consequences, and have had fewer incitements to reflect on the misfortune of displeasing God, and of being the objects of his hatred and indignation. From time to time, it is true, eternity and its torments would have entered our mind and troubled our conscience, but the hope of a future repentance attended with a complete pardon and satisfaction would quickly have restored us to our peace of mind, or rather to the dominion of our passions; we should more easily have yielded to temptation, and have pursued with less fear and remorse the seductive paths of vice. On the contrary, by being subjected to temporal sufferings, we are taught to comprehend, before the commission of sin, how dearly it will have to be expiated afterwards; and being moreover threatened with punishment in the next, if we neglect to perform our expiation in this, we become more forcibly struck with the numerous effects of sin, we hasten to begin our work of satisfaction, lest time should not be granted us for accomplishing or at least advancing it in this life. During the course of our penance, we conceive more disgust and hatred for the crimes which bring bitterness and punishment upon us: we make the strongest resolutions of avoiding them for the time to come, and courageously fly every occasion of them. And even the benefit of our redemption is more deeply impressed upon our minds, when we reflect that, without it, our greatest efforts would have been unavailing, and we should have perished eternally. In proportion to the severity of the satisfaction required of us, our circumspection increases, and our virtue is strengthened; as we may easily be convinced by comparing the penitents of the primitive Church with the penitents of our relaxed ages. Thus by remitting eternal and still retaining temporal punishments, a curb is put upon our impetuosity, a second barrier to the sallies of passion: and it is not true, that Jesus Christ, by making this reservation, has limited his goodness to us. I would rather assert that, by so doing, he has made it boundless and infinite; for he has left more assistance to our frailty, and thrown more restraint upon our natural perversity; he doubly secures us against relapses and more efficaciously opposes our vicious inclinations

Let those, who heartily apply themselves to works of satisfaction and penance, say whether this theory is false or true. "Man, equally frail and rash, stands in need of restraint in every way. He needs restraint by the prospect of eternal evils; and when this apprehension is removed, as far as it can be removed in this life, he again needs restraint by the foresight of other punishments that he will bring upon himself both in this world and the other, if notwithstanding his frailty and continual disobedience, he neglects to subject himself to an exact and severe discipline. Thus the foolish confidence, that so easily abuses forgiveness, and, if unrestrained, rushes forward into vice, is curbed and checked on all sides; and if the sinner escapes in spite of all these considerations, we may judge of the injury he would sustain by the retrenchment of any of them. Who, therefore, does not see, that it is serviceable to the sinner, for the reasons we have mentioned, to be under the apprehension of such chastisements, and consequently that, in the remission of sins, we admit of no reservation of punishment, but what may be serviceable for the salvation of souls."¹

Again it must be observed, that the punishments we have to undergo here below bear no proportion with the chastisement due to sin: the equivalent is only to be found in eternity, and the just compensation in the merits of the cross. The redemption of our Mediator therefore is perfect, and his adorable wisdom has discovered the only means of conciliating the mercy that pardons us for eternity, with the justice that punishes us in time.

Now, Sir, I ask, is it derogatory from the merits of the cross to acknowledge that it alone has offered a sufficient compensation to the Divine justice, that it alone has redeemed us from an eternity of misery; that, without it, the human race was inevitably lost; that, without it, heaven would never have been opened to any of the children of Adam; and that no one can expect to enter heaven but by the blood of our Redeemer? Is it derogatory from the merits of the cross to believe that, without a particular application of his infinite merits to each of us, it is im-

¹ Bossuet, *Sur la satisfaction*. A fragment in his posthumous works.

possible for any one to reap the benefit of it; that this application absolutely requires our concurrence, because he, who has created us without our concurrence, will not save us without our concurrence, and yet that our personal and satisfactory works are of themselves but dead works, but that, being united to the sufferings and satisfaction of Christ, they acquire life strength and vigor, so that through Jesus Christ they are then offered to the Father, and in Jesus Christ are then accepted by the Father? ¹ Is it derogating from the merits of the cross to render ourselves imitators of the crucified Jesus, as far as we are able; to punish, after his example, our own sins upon ourselves, as he was pleased that they should be punished in his divine person: to join our poor and ineffectual satisfaction to that which he has abundantly made for us by his blood? Is it not our duty to imitate to the best of our power, him who came down from heaven to be our model, and who has said: “He that will come after me let him take up his cross and follow me?” Is it not evident that, far from derogating from the merits of our Saviour, far from being incompatible with his sufferings, our temporal satisfactions are even absolutely inseparable from them? Does it stand to reason, that, because we cannot offer a sufficient satisfaction, we are therefore to offer none; and that, because we are unable to pay the whole debt, we are therefore dispensed with from making any attempt to pay, according to our capability and means!²

How would such maxims have been received by the apostles, who were unceasingly preaching mortification and penance? How would they have been received by St. Paul, who has so energetically told us, that, if we would reign with Jesus Christ, we must suffer with him, and consequently must suffer for our sins, the sole cause of his sufferings? How would such doctrine

¹ Council of Trent, Sect. XIV. Ch. xviii. ² “Without the sufferings of our divine Saviour, your sufferings would be unfruitful; without yours, his would be of no service. His sufferings give the value to yours, and yours alone can give effect to his. Let the remembrance of his satisfaction support and direct yours, let it be your encouragement and model, and let it teach you the necessity and manner of practising it.” M. le cardinal de la Luzerne, in his pious and profound *Considerations sur la Passion*, page 328.

have been received by the Fathers and the great luminaries of Christian antiquity? by Tertullian, who thus addressed the sinner: "Thou hast offended God, but thou canst be reconciled; thou hast a God to whom thou canst *make satisfaction*, and who desires it..... Believe me, the less thou shalt spare thyself, the more will God spare thee?" by St. Cyprian,¹ who vigorously opposed those who reconciled sinners, by curtailing too easily the penance imposed: "What do they intend by such interference? unless it be that Jesus Christ is less appeased by pains and *satisfactions*?..... unless it be that sins are no longer expiated by just *satisfactions* and lamentations, and that the wounds cease to be washed with tears?..... that every deep wound requires not a long and careful treatment; and that the penance should be less than the crime?" by St. Ambrose, who, comparing the wounds of the soul to those of the body, wrote to a young person whose virtue had suffered shipwreck: "A great wound requires powerful and long-continued remedies; in like manner, a great crime necessarily requires a great satisfaction?" by St. Augustin, who seems to have foreseen, even in his time, the error of the reformation, and who refutes it in these terms: "It is not enough to correct our evil manners, and to abstain from sin; unless moreover *satisfaction* be made to God for our past offences, by penitential sorrow, by the tears of an humble spirit, by the sacrifice of a contrite heart joined to alms-giving?"² How would the doctrine of the reformation respecting satisfaction have been re-

¹ Ep. LV. to Pope Cornelius. ²The following profound reflection of the great St. Augustin puts forth in open day the correctness of our doctrine, and the erroneousness of yours. "Man is still condemned to suffer after his sins have been remitted, and although his sins are the original cause of his sufferings, the punishment remains longer than the fault, lest the fault should appear trivial, if the punishment had ended together with it. It is therefore with a view to prove the misery he has deserved, to correct a nature prone to sin, and to exercise the patience so necessary for him, that man is visited with temporal punishments, even after he ceases to be condemned, for his crimes, to an eternity of torments." S. Augustin. *Traet. CXXIV. in Joan.*

There are therefore, even after the pardon of our sins, temporal punishments to be undergone: and these pains are inflicted upon us, not only to exercise our patience and to prevent relapses, but also to impress us with an idea of the punishment due to our sins. *Ad demonstrationem debita miserie.*

ceived by the numerous other learned divines of these same ages, whom it will be needless to quote here since Calvin allows the uniformity of their doctrine on this point to be undeniable? "I am little moved," said this pretended reformer, "with what is found at every step about satisfaction in the writings of the ancients. I perceive that the greatest part, or, to speak plainly, almost all those, whose works are extant, have either positively erred on this subject, or have spoken of it too austere-ly."

Finally, how would such doctrines have been received by the universal Church, which, not only for the edification of the faithful and the reformation of sinners, but also for the punishment of their sins, as all the Fathers of those times attest, put them upon a severe and long-continued course of penance, the very description of which would shock the effeminate feelings of our age? What would have been the indignation of the ancient Church to have heard the novelty of such doctrine? How would she have frowned upon its first propagators! How loudly would she have reproved them! Soon, very soon would she have reduced them to silence, or driven them from her bosom.

In truth, it appears to me not a little strange that they, who in the sixteenth century broached these maxims, till then unknown, should have risen up with so much virulence against the Church of those times, when the ceremonies of satisfaction were so much reduced in number and severity. How came they not to attack the primitive Church, which went to such lengths with its satisfactory penalties, which never gave canonical penance more than once, and taught that after a relapse the whole life of a great sinner was not too much for the expiation of his sins and that he must not look for absolution till the last extremity of life! Such was the discipline they should have characterized as cruel, merciless and barbarous; such was the doctrine they should have condemned as highly and blasphemously derogatory from the cross and merits of our Divine Redeemer. But they would have been ashamed at conduct so outrageous: and moreover, the honor and reputation of the primitive Church was too well established in the mind of Christians to allow them any

hopes of success in such an attack; the insult offered to her discipline and belief would have returned upon her unworthy slanderers and buried them in merited ignominy and confusion. This the reformation was well aware of from its commencement, and hence its affected veneration for the Church of the first ages, and the opposition pretended to be discovered between the primitive Church and the Church of later times. The latter was accused of having added fresh doctrines to the doctrines of antiquity, and superstitious and idolatrous practices to its ancient worship. The world was told that it was now to be eased of the cumbersome load of all its extraneous and modern dogmas and practices, and to be reduced to the simplicity of primitive faith and discipline. Under this specious pretext they succeeded in retrenching, according to their fancy, precisely that which had been believed and practised in the golden ages of Christianity. Of this you have seen numerous examples in the preceding letters.

If the reformers had really intended to revive the ancient spirit of the Church, they would have loudly declaimed against the relaxation of later times. The enervated state of discipline, the necessity of satisfying God nearly forgotten, and neglected in practice, the coldness of piety, the decay of morals, would have afforded ample subject for declamation and well-founded invective. They would have given an edifying example by returning to the ancient discipline, and would have taught sinners severely to punish themselves for their offences committed against God, and not to spare themselves in this world, that they might be spared in the next; they would have subjected their penitents, if not to all the rigors of the canonical penance, at least to longer trials and heavier satisfactions than those which prevailed in their times. By so doing, they would have restored weight and dignity to sound principles, rekindled the fervor of ancient times, and encouraged all the Church to follow their example, or have manifestly convicted them of base indolence and tepidity: and we in our days should have had the pleasing task of praising and thanking them for the infinite service they had rendered to re-

gion. How happens it that they have acted in this manner, after having solemnly announced that their sole object was to bring back religion to the faith of the primitive times? Must I tell you the reason? It was plausible and useful to boast of their devotedness to antiquity: but the step they took in totally an opposite direction too clearly proved the hollow insincerity of their pretensions. Their real object was to gain partizans proselytes and conquests. To preach up mortification and inculcate the necessity of satisfying and appeasing heaven by expiatory works would not have suited their purpose. The fasts and austerities of penance were not adapted to the taste of the age; the pale and emaciated countenance of the penitent would have thrown the multitude into dismay. The most effectual way to swell the ranks of their followers was to put their consciences at ease: and consequently satisfaction with its accompanying austerities was lopped off at a stroke; and this too, so effectually, that not even were the feeble remnants of satisfactory works, still lingering in the world, able to preserve themselves from the general anathema fulminated against them.

But there are truths so inherent in Christianity that it is not in our power to separate them from it, or even to rid ourselves entirely of them. Notwithstanding all this furious declamation against satisfaction, protestants are never backward, when occasion requires, to speak in praise of satisfactory works and to recommend them as useful and even necessary. They then express themselves, just as we do, respecting abstinence and fasting, the care of the orphan and the widow, visiting the sick, alms-deeds, in fine upon all the works which are reckoned by Catholics among the most important satisfactions. "We admit that alms merit many graces, that they procure a relaxation of punishment, that they merit for us the favor of being protected in the peril of sin and death."¹ This is admitting, in other words, that alms appease the Lord, and in a certain way satisfy his justice. Read their sermons: in them they produce, in order to exhort their people to repentance, the examples of Moses,

¹ Apology of the Confession of Augsburgh, page 117.

David and others, whom we instance in defence of the necessity of satisfaction. They will have their people to apply themselves to labors and groanings, in order to appease the anger of God; but do not appeasing the anger of God, and satisfying his justice, amount to one and the same thing? Our grand object, in endeavoring to make satisfaction to God, is to appease him; and the means they appoint for appeasing him are the identical means we prescribe and employ to make him satisfaction. Take up the "Book of Common Prayer" and peruse attentively the Communion that is read on the first day of Lent, and also at other times, as may be appointed. It commences by informing the assembled faithful that, "In the primitive Church there was a godly discipline, that, at the beginning of Lent, such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance, and punished in this world, that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord.....instead whereof, *until the said discipline may be restored again*, WHICH IS MUCH TO BE DESIRED, &c." Now that this discipline had greatly in view the edification of the faithful, and the conversion of sinners, is unquestionable; but that it had also for its object the punishment of sins and the satisfaction to be made by the sinner to God, is not less true, according to the testimonies of all the Fathers of those times, as Calvin and other reformers after him have acknowledged.

Allow me to refer you also to the beautiful prayers recited in your church, to beg of God seasons favorable to the fruits of the earth, and in the time of dearth and famine, of war and tumults, or of any common plague or sickness. In these prayers you will discover the true principles of satisfaction in the acknowledgment made to God that these scourges are just chastisements, inflicted by him to punish the iniquity of kingdoms. According to your confession, therefore, there are temporal punishments to be undergone on account of our iniquities: and since you admit this in the case of entire nations during public calamities, you cannot but make the same admission in respect of individuals under the particular afflictions of life; for individuals compose nations, and there is not a day in which some do not meet with those suffer-

ings, which nations more rarely experience in seasons of public calamity. It would appear therefore that protestant theologians virtually agree with us in the thing itself, and merely dispute about the term. It is the word satisfaction that creates the alarm: one might imagine that they swore it should never escape from their lips. But you will allow that it is consecrated in the writings of all the Fathers, and that antiquity holds no other language. It is not true therefore, as you reformers vainly boasted, that you were returning to the ancient belief and practice: and their idle pretensions to antiquity amounted to this, that they took from the primitive Church what suited their fancy, and rejected whatever was irksome and disagreeable. Let us act with more honesty and consistency, and cling with sincerity to the ancient faith and practice; for the principle is good, we have only to follow it boldly. Let us then join with antiquity in believing the necessity of satisfaction, and also unite with it in the practice of satisfactory works.

You are not to imagine, however, that I would subject you to all the rigors of the canonical discipline. My idea is briefly this. There are two things to be considered in the subject we are treating: 1. The necessity of satisfying God, defined by the Church and proved, as we have seen, from Scripture and tradition. This necessity of making satisfaction is, therefore, an article of faith, and consequently an invariable dogma that we are all obliged to believe. 2. The manner of satisfying for our sins. This manner is determined and regulated by the Church: it is variable according to times and circumstances, like all other points of discipline. There have been two different degrees of severity: the lesser, at the time perhaps in which we live: the greater, at the time of Novatus, who, through an excess of severity, took away forgiveness from satisfactory punishments, which, by an opposite extreme, Luther has since taken away from forgiveness. The confessor who should now subject his penitent to the satisfactory punishments of the third age, would be almost as blameable as he who should require of him no penance whatever. Sin must be punished: but the punishments of former times are not

to be required. The Church which had established them has also done away with them: its actual discipline is the law, and to this law directors must ever conform. As for sinners, they are bound scrupulously to perform the penances imposed upon them; far from endeavoring to diminish them, their safest way would be to add voluntary punishments, remembering that if they had lived in ancient times, their penance would have been very different from what it is: that sins are not now less enormous or less deserving of punishment than formerly; that the Church did not then require too much from penitents; and that it was with regret she has since found herself obliged, from the miserable tepidity of the age, to treat them with much less severity than their sins deserve. Let us then at least fervently perform the little that is prescribed; let us even go beyond it and do more. Full of a just apprehension that we have not sufficiently expiated our offences, let us have recourse to the mercies of the Lord, to the infinite merits of the cross, the treasures of which are confided to the Church, and let us render ourselves worthy of the indulgences which she grants to those who apply for them with the sentiments of true contrition.

LETTER XIII.

Indulgences and Purgatory

I can imagine, Sir, the unpleasant impression which these words will have made upon you. I am not surprised at it: for, as yet, you only know indulgencies by the portrait of them exhibited by your own Church. I will endeavor to represent them to you under their true features and natural form. When you see what they really are, you will soon, I trust be reconciled with them; perhaps even you will feel a wish to avail yourself of them. For it seems to me that it is enough to know them, to be induced to seek after them.

Sin, as we have just seen, deserved punishment in time and eternity: the God-man by his death had delivered us from the eternal punishment, but in taking upon himself that expiation which was beyond our strength, he had not exempted us from that which is proportioned to it; whence we concluded that after our sin is forgiven and the eternal punishment remitted, it remains for us to undergo a temporal expiation. But it is absolutely required that we suffer this in its full rigor and extent? Or may not the Church, in certain circumstances, possess the power of softening its rigor and reducing its extent? We believe that such a power has been granted her in our favor, and we gratefully acknowledge it among the benefits procured for us by the mediation of Jesus Christ. "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; whatsoever you shall loose, shall be loosed." "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." This promise is general, excluding every kind of exception; therefore it refers no less to the temporal, than to the eternal punishment. You likewise with good reason establish on these words the right of censures and excommunication, which you admit in your Church. But if by virtue of these words, the

Church can retain the sinner in the bonds of excommunication, much more can she retain him in the weaker bonds of satisfactory punishment, and if, when she judges it proper she can take off his excommunication, why should she not lighten or abridge a less severe punishment? St. Paul¹ tells us positively that to the Church belongs this double right of prescribing and mitigating satisfactory punishments. It is in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in virtue of his power, that he imposes a severe punishment on the incestuous man at Corinth: and in the name and person of the Lord, he abridges his penance, the year following. "To whom you have forgiven any thing, I also. For, what I forgave, if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes have I done it in the person of Christ."²

Supported by the example of St. Paul, and the promise of our Saviour, the Church has, in all ages, exercised this right of mitigation and indulgence towards true penitents, according to the state and circumstances of her discipline. Formerly she appointed the duration and certain relaxations of the punishments which she inflicted, because they were long and rigorous; but at the present day, as her indulgence cannot extend to the much lighter satisfactions which she now requires it applies to those which would have been imposed upon us, if the ancient regulations had continued in full vigor, and which most certainly are not the less to be exacted in the next world, because they are no longer required in this. During the persecution, the confessors from the depths of their dungeons, requested, and obtained for penitents a relaxation of their works of satisfaction. Tertullian assures us of it, both when he approves of this custom in his address to the martyrs, and even when, after becoming a Montanist, he blames it in his latter works.³ St. Cyprian admits the power of granting such indulgences; and only reproves the indiscretion of certain confessors in asking, and of certain priests in granting them before the time. The council of Nice⁴ permits bishops to treat those penitents more mildly, who by their

¹ I. Cor. v. 4. ² II. Cor. ii. 10. ³ Lib. I. ad Mart. Cap. 1. Lib. de prudentia. C. 21. ⁴ Canon IIth.

works and tears shall have given unequivocal proofs of sincere conversion. The same spirit of compassion and indulgence is also shewn in the particular councils of Ancyra, Neocæsarea, Laodicea and Carthage. It would not be difficult to follow, with the learned cardinal Ballarmin, this traditional chain from the fourth century to the twelfth, the date which those of the reformed religion pretend to assign to the origin of indulgences. It ascends incontestably to the first century, and comes from the institution of Christ himself, in the power which he confers upon his apostles and all their successors to bind or loose, to retain or remit sins.

But in vain would the Church exercise such a power, if, on his part, the penitent did not concur to give it value and effect. It is the same with indulgences, and with absolutions; their validity depends upon the sinners dispositions: and indulgence can only be usefully applied to him who has a sincere sorrow for his sins, who has humbly confessed all mortal sins of which he knew himself to be guilty; who penetrated in a proper manner with a desire to satisfy the justice of God, has neglected nothing hitherto prescribed to him in order to such satisfaction, and seeks the favor of the Church with no other view than to supply the insufficiency of his former expiations: who moreover, after fulfilling the conditions on which the indulgences are granted, finds himself, at the time of receiving them, entirely absolved from his sins. For favors cannot be dispensed to enemies, they are only for souls who are either faithful, or admitted to reconciliation.

When these dispositions, of necessity to be required, are found in the penitent, what effect will be produced in him by an indulgence? We have seen, that by the institution of Jesus Christ, our sins can only be forgiven by the absolution of his minister, founded upon his previous knowledge of our sins and of our repentance. Except the cases of martyrdom and perfect contrition which include the desire of confession, there is no other means of obtaining pardon of sins. It follows that indulgences are by no means intended to remit them, but on the contrary,

they suppose them to be already forgiven. There are bulls in existence, as I am well aware, which positively attribute to indulgences the power of remitting sins; but they are decidedly fictitious and false and consequently no way entitled to regard: there are other authentic bulls, which may appear to exhibit the same sense and the same error; but they sufficiently explain themselves, because they add that the indulgences are only for those who are *truly penitent and contrite, and who have confessed their sins*, which at once explains their principle. If such bulls are not so correct in terms as it could be wished, it is but just to admit that there was less reason to be scrupulously attentive to their terms, previous to the subsequent disputes on the subject of indulgences.

Now, Sir, judge what ought to be your opinion of those among you, who not only represent indulgences as so many absolutions from sins committed, but even distort them to permissions and *licences* to commit in future with impunity every sin we can wish to perpetrate. We feel shame and pity for men, who could so far degrade themselves as to charge the Church with notions so absurd and extravagant. For they cannot have been ignorant that she has never ceased to condemn those agents or distributors, whether avaricious or ignorant, who have too often employed themselves in disseminating fraudulently among the people false ideas on the effects of indulgences.¹ I repeat it; they can

¹ The general council of Lateran (anno 1215 under Innocent III.) to obviate abuses introduced by gatherers or receivers of alms, ordained that in future they should be nominated by the Holy See, or by the diocesan bishops: "Many of those who receive alms, and give themselves out falsely for other persons; having advanced certain objectionable propositions in their sermons, we forbid any to be admitted as collectors, who shall not have been authorised thereto by authentic letters from the Holy See or the diocesan bishop. And even then it shall not be lawful for them to propose any thing, but what shall be obtained in their letters."

"It having come to our knowledge," says the council of Vienne, (anno 1311 under Clement V.) "that several of that kind of collectors, by rash boldness, and to the seduction and ruin of souls, take upon them to grant, of their own pleasure, indulgences to the people, to dispense with vows, to absolve in confession from perjury, murder and other sins, to calm the consciences of the possessors of goods unjustly acquired, for a sum of money, to remit a third or a fourth part of

neither remit sins, nor the eternal punishment which sins have deserved. They regard exclusively the punishment which remains to be undergone in time, after the eternal punishment has been remitted.

enjoined penances, to deliver from purgatory, as they boast of doing by a scandalous lie, and to transport to the joys of paradise the souls of the friends or relations of those who deposit alms in their hands, to give full remission of sins to the benefactors of those places where they collect, and further to absolve, as they express it from the *punishment* and the *guilt*: we, desirous of abolishing such abuses, which degrade ecclesiastical censures, and bring contempt upon the keys, forbid most strictly the commission in future of any and all such unworthy practices..... We understand and direct that all collectors abusing their commission in these, or any other ways, shall be immediately punished by the bishops of the several places where they are found.....”

“We ordain,” says a council of Freisingen, (an. 1440) “that the indulgences granted by the Holy See shall be published and exposed to the people by the rector or some other well informed, learned and exemplary priest, nominated for this purpose by the diocesan bishop or his vicar.”

The council of Trent beholding with sorrow that the prohibitions of former councils had not been able to eradicate abuses, judged it necessary to cut at once to the quick: it suppressed the office of *questor* or collector, and would abolish even the name, in detestation of their scandalous abuses: it ordained (Sess. 21, C. IX.) that in future indulgences should be published by the bishops, assisted by two canons of their respective chapters.

St. Charles Borromæus vigorously executed in his diocese this regulation of the council of Trent, without regard to any privileges which religious orders might have obtained.

In fine, Benedict XIV. in his learned work *De Synodo* (Book 13, c. 18, No. 7) does not hesitate to attribute to the collectors of past times all the storms which have been raised in the Church on the subject of indulgences.

If Luther, supported by the councils of Lateran, Vienne and Trent, and by the concurrent sentiments of the most able divines, of such a man for instance, as cardinal Cusa, who gained the admiration of Germany in the legation which he performed, and in which he published the indulgence of the jubilee in 1450; if Luther had only risen up against the ignorance of the preachers in his time, and the disgraceful traffic which was made of indulgences, he would have merited the applause of the Church, and of all succeeding ages. But this man of violent passions, neither knew how to master himself, nor curb the impetuosity which urged him step by step to rebellion. The consequences of that too celebrated dispute are well known, as also how, passing on from the abuse to the principle, he went so far as to deny that the Church had any power to grant indulgences to penitents.

“Give rather to the poor” he exclaimed again and again to his hearers, “give, for the love of God, to the poor the money which is demanded of you for the building of St. Peter’s.” Who ever doubted that we ought to give to the poor?

But do not suppose that indulgences exempt us from all works, of satisfaction. It would be a dangerous error to attach such an idea even to a plenary indulgence.¹ For 1. According to the council of Trent, satisfaction is part of the matter of the sacrament of penance; and it is not in the power of the Church to take away any part of the matter of a sacrament. Thus indulgences, however ample, cannot release us from such satisfaction as we are able to perform.

2. The popes can have no intention of setting aside a commandment of Jesus Christ: it is written; "bring forth fruits worthy of penance:" and again, "unless you do penance, you shall all perish."² There is no part of our lives in which we are not obliged to accomplish this divine precept: none in which we can cease to be penitents, since we never cease to be sinners. And in fact, the popes, when they publish indulgences, always carefully enjoin prayers, visits to Churches, fasting, alms, &c., and the jubilee bulls direct salutary penances to be imposed upon sinners: whence it follows that the Catholic who endeavors

How often have Churches given up their vessels of gold and silver, their ornaments and jewels to feed the poor? But does charity towards our indigent brethren forbid extraordinary succor for the erection of a temple to the Lord, particularly in the Mother Church? If the abuses in collecting alms in Luther's time are to be condemned, where is the man of sense and good taste who could blame the intention of those alms? Surely none of those who have visited and admired that Church, the most worthy monument which men ever erected with their feeble hands to the supreme Majesty God.

¹ It appears that Turpin, archbishop of Rhemes (an. 963) granted plenary indulgences to those who should follow Charlemagne into Spain against the Saracens, and that Phocas Nicephorus 2nd. not only wished them to be granted to those who made war with him against the same barbarians, but that those who fell in the expeditions might be declared martyrs. It was not therefore Urban 2nd. (an. 1095) as it is commonly asserted, who first employed the expression *plenary*, in the indulgences which he granted to such as should take up arms to deliver the Holy Land from the Turks. For the rest, if we consider how much it must have cost the crusaders to leave their affairs, their customs, their country, their home, their friends and families to expose themselves to fatigues, dangers, hazards of land and sea, climates and battles, we shall find in these expeditions a continuance of satisfactory works, which certainly deserved the indulgences which Urban 2nd. and other pontiffs after him attached to them, provided that they were undertaken and finished in a spirit of penance, and with a pure zeal for religion. ² St. Luke xiii. 5.

frequently to gain indulgences, will pass his life piously in works of satisfaction.

3. If it were even true that by means of the indulgence, such works ceased to be necessary for us as temporal punishments, they would still continue to be so as preservatives from relapse, and as medicinal precautions to preserve us from the effects of our own vicious propensities. But who could ever promise himself and feel assured that they were no longer necessary for him, in the way of temporal punishment? Who has ever comprehended the magnitude and extent of that which God has reserved for him? He alone can know it, who has fixed its measure. As for us, being unable to fathom his decrees, we ought always to fear that our poor satisfactions are still very far from the mark. If you tell me that you found your assurance upon the authority of the Church, and the promise which she has made you of a total and plenary indulgence, I must ask you whether you are certain that you have perfectly availed yourself of it. Has the indulgence found you in the dispositions required to receive all the fruit of it? Although it be plenary on the part of the offerer, it may not be so on the part of the receiver, it is plenary in the intention, because the Church offers all that she can give, and the faithful can receive; but in its effect it only becomes plenary by the personal dispositions with which we apply for it. St. Gregory 7th. grants indulgences to the bishop of Lincoln¹ "on condition," as he writes, "that applying yourself to good works, and bewailing your past sins, you make of your body a pure temple to God." Here Card. Baronius makes the following reflections: "The indulgences of the apostolic see are communicated to those who do not neglect good works, but by no means to the idle, slothful and those who slumber in negligence." The following principle is praised and approved of by Gelasius 2nd.² "Each one receives the value of indulgences, in proportion to his penance and good works."

"Although," says Innocent 4th.,³ "indulgences are generally granted to labors, perils and devout exercises, some neverthe-

¹ Anno. 1057. ² An. 1118. ³ An. 1243.

less derive more benefit from them than others, according as they dispose themselves for them with greater devotion."

"The man," says Boniface 8th.,¹ "who visits the Church of the apostles most frequently, and with the greatest devotion, deserves and receives the most from indulgences." Pope Urban 8th.² proclaiming the ordinary jubilee, addresses himself thus to the patriarchs, metropolitans and bishops: "Instruct your people that in vain will they expect to derive any benefit from the sacred treasure of indulgences, if they do not prepare themselves by a contrite and humble heart, and do not exercise themselves in works of Christian piety." Thus from the decisions of the sovereign pontiffs, the dispensers of these extraordinary favors, the fruit derived from them is proportioned to the dispositions with which they are received. But we know not whether we have had that exalted degree of piety and fervor, which alone could merit all the fruit of a plenary indulgence: consequently we cannot know whether temporal punishment has been entirely remitted in our regard, or whether there does not still remain a part more or less considerable, for us to expiate. Therefore we ought to continue the course of our expiatory endeavors during the whole of our lives.

But, you will say, if we must continue satisfactory words to the end, where is the advantage of indulgences, and what benefit results to us from them? I answer, that besides attaching us more and more to religion by the exercises of piety and penance which they ordain, they have a farther advantage very precious, and peculiar to themselves — that of supplying what is defective in our satisfactions. Let us only compare our works of satisfaction with those of ancient times; let us think of all that penitents endured in those days, and of the little that we now do to recover the grace of God. And yet, are our faults less than theirs? Is our obligation to satisfy less urgent than theirs? Slothful and unworthy penitents as we are! Eager and always strong enough to do evil, infirm and without heart to repair it, what would become of us, if the Church left us to ourselves?

¹An. 1300. ²An. 1624.

For, after all the justice of God must be satisfied: the temporal punishment which he reserves for our faults must be expiated: it would never be so in our life-time by a mere shadow, a phantom of penance: it would remain then almost entirely to be expiated after our death, and for having spared ourselves so much in this life, we should have much to suffer in the next. But the Church can, and is willing to remit by indulgences, those sufferings which would await us in the other world, for having neglected to suffer them in this: and doubtless so inestimable an advantage cannot be sought after too eagerly.

Let us therefore consider ourselves as debtors to the Almighty to an immense amount, the full extent of which we cannot know. How are we to proceed to liquidate our debt? We must imitate the wisdom of our forefathers in religion: like them be sparing in all our expenses, reduce ourselves to what is strictly necessary, cut to the quick, and employ our rigid savings, our fruits of long economy in solving as far as possible, our whole debt. Thus ought we to proceed. But what is our conduct? Scarcely any retrenchment in our expenditure: we go on much in the same routine, we have the same taste, the same fancies. We live, in a manner, as if we owed nothing, as if we had no sum at all to liquidate. In certain fortunate moments we grieve perhaps to find ourselves so much in arrears, and we feel urged to begin in good earnest to pay; but we set about it with an ill grace, we are afraid of taking too much upon ourselves; the smallest sacrifice is a trouble to us, the least privation fatigues us, the slightest effort over-powers us; we defer settling our accounts from day to day, and death surprises us before we have put our affairs in order. What is the consequence? We shall not be free from our debts, and shall not escape the creditor whom we have neglected to satisfy. God will know how to visit upon us in the world into which he calls us, he will be well able to recover what is his due, but in a manner which to us will be much more severe and terrible. How fortunate then should we be, if while we are still in this world, we were to meet with some powerful and charitable personage, who would present us the whole sum which

we still owe, and make us fit to appear before God, without having to undergo the rigors of his justice. Now this is exactly the favor offered us by the Church. From the infinite treasure in her hands, she draws and presents to us sufficient to free us from all farther debt, without requiring any more on our part, than that we receive her gifts with true sentiments of compunction, love and humble gratitude towards Him, whose riches she communicates and dispenses to us.

In a word, the temporal punishment which God reserves for us, must be accomplished; justice demands, and will have satisfaction, either in this world or the next. It is not satisfied in this life by our works, which are too insignificant, therefore it must be satisfied in the next: but the Church, by applying to us the infinite merits, of which she is the depository: saves us entirely, or in part, according to our dispositions, from the pains we must otherwise endure there. Such is the invaluable benefit of indulgences.

I know of one method only of not requiring them; and surely it was the duty of the reformers to teach it to the world, since they would hear nothing of indulgences. This method, which, after all, would not suffice in all cases,—would be for Christians to return to the purity of primitive manners; and that for those faults, which human weakness could not entirely avoid, the ancient penitential discipline should be re-established in all the rigor of its works of satisfaction. Then would the sinner pay the price of his ransom entirely, or in a great measure. Restore to us then the ancient discipline or allow us in default of that, to profit by the favors of the Church. But since, according to your own acknowledgment, the former is become absolutely impracticable, it is madness to cut off the resources which the Church substitutes for it; it is folly, it is even a kind of suicide.

To me it appears impossible to desire heaven, without loving and reverencing the Church who opens us an easy way to it—without wishing to procure a portion of the riches which she pours forth. Give me a man decided on quitting his disorderly

life to return to God with his whole heart; a man sensible of the fatal condition in which he has been living, of the infinite Majesty whom he has so much offended, of the greatness of the satisfaction which he owes to him, and lamenting his inability to render it, either from having spent his strength in iniquity, or from being too far advanced in life to hope for time to execute his wishes:—with what holy eagerness will such a man comply with the invitation of the Church! With what avidity will he lay hold of the resources which she presents to him! What ardor will he shew to render himself worthy of them, and to reap ample benefit from them! What fear lest he should let slip the precious opportunity! For we know how to value remedies, when we have once felt the danger of the evils from which they relieve us. But it is not necessary to recur to such examples of striking or late conversion, souls the most devoted to penance cannot be ignorant that the satisfactory works of our days, are far behind those which the canons prescribed: they ought to apprehend remaining still deeply indebted to God's justice, and feel in consequence the want of extraordinary helps, which will be productive of more fruit in them, as they are better disposed by their penance to receive them. Thus indulgences ought to be equally desirable to the strong and to the weak; to the latter, as a supplementary aid to their extreme inability, to the former, as the completion of their well supported exertions: and there can never be room to fear that the grants of the Church will be injurious to the spirit of penance, since they mutually assist and animate each other; penance being the true disposition to obtain indulgences, as it is said by a celebrated author, while indulgences are, in their turn, the accomplishment of penance.

Purgatory—Praying for the Dead.

After all, our faults are so heavy and multiplied, penance is so rare among us, and generally so trifling, our dispositions to profit by indulgences are so defective and uncertain, that after having been absolved and forgiven, there must remain but too

often much for us to expiate in the other world. But where? In what place, and in what manner? Had it been necessary for us to be instructed on these questions, Jesus Christ would doubtless have revealed the knowledge of them. He has not done it: therefore we can only form conjectures more or less probable; I shall not trouble you with a detail of them, having only undertaken to elucidate dogmas and not human opinions.¹ Of whatever kind it may be, the place of these painful and temporary expiations has been appropriately called *purgatory*, by the councils of Florence and Trent,² and whatever may be the kind of torments with which souls are there afflicted, we know and it ought to satisfy us to know, that they are in a state of suffering, unhappy and unable to help themselves. For them, the time of probation is past. It was confined to the few days which were measured out to them upon earth; and with those days it expired. No more good works can they pursue, there are no more alms to be distributed, no more satisfaction to be offered to heaven; one only method remains of making satisfaction—that of suffering.

If this be the case, you reply, why can I not now stretch out a saving hand to all these souls? particularly to those who were dear to me here on earth, to that gentle and affectionate soul who perhaps is at this moment suffering in those darksome abodes for faults, which but for me, she would never have committed! O why is it not granted me to be able to alleviate her pain, and

¹ Were I to ask you the situation of *limbo*, the place which contained the souls of the just departed before Jesus Christ, you would have nothing but conjectures to give me in reply: you admit the existence of *limbo*, because its existence is proved to you, although its local position remains unknown. Let it equally suffice for us to be assured of the existence of purgatory, without troubling ourselves about its locality, without enquiring how souls can be confined in a place, since they were so in that which we call *limbo*, or Abraham's bosom.

² All antiquity speaks of some intermediate place, where souls previously to entering heaven, must be *purified* from their lesser stains. St. Cyprian, Ep. 2. Origen Hom. 6 upon Exod. St. Greg. of Nyssa. Disc. on the dead, *passim*. St. Greg. Great, B. 4, Dialog ch. 39 and on the 3rd penit. psalm. St. Aug. *City of God* B. 21 ch. 16 and 24, Hom. 16 and often elsewhere. St. Jerome at the end of his Com. on Isaias. Theodoret on I Cor. ch. 3. St. Isidore Lib. de offic. divin. ch. 18. Boetius, B. 4, ps. 4. Ven Bede on Ps. 37. St. Peter Damian Serm. 2. on St. Andrew. St. Anselm on I Cor. ch. 3, &c. &c.

abridge its duration! You can do it, Sir, it is in your own power. Do not believe your unhappy-Reformation, it would bitterly separate you from those whom you have lost: it allows you to give them nothing but useless tears and lamentations. Take up other ideas. I like to believe that you have not proceeded thus far in our discussion, without having felt more than once the necessity of being again united to the Catholic Church. Listen then to what that tender and venerable mother tells you, who reckoned your forefathers among her children of so many centuries. She teaches us, that we can, by our prayers and good works render service to our brethren beyond the tomb; that we can alleviate their pains, and accelerate their deliverance; that our connexion with them is not broken, because it is changed; that new relations have replaced the old; that if we no longer live together, we are still brethren and friends; and that if we can no longer, as heretofore, hear them, and converse with them, we can at least still cherish them, and find consolation in the relief which we procure them, for whatever pain or trouble it may cause to ourselves. I am aware that this doctrine is, by your reformed system, rejected with ignominy as an illusion-pleasant and vain, flattering and deceitful. Were it nothing more, why deprive us of it? Were it only an error, why snatch it from us, if it be wholly innocent in itself, and if nothing can better encourage us when we survive our friends, than the thought that we may be every day of our lives useful to those who can no longer be so to themselves? But, no Sir, the consolation of this doctrine is neither vain, nor deceitful; this intercourse between earth and purgatory is not an illusion; and God himself has formed the bond which unites them both, for the consolation of those who remain, and the relief of those who are gone before. But this you will say, is no more than empty assertion. You shall see it proved; I submit it to your judgment, and to that of your doctors; let it be as rigorous as they please, provided it be impartial and equitable. 1. This doctrine though confirmed by it, is more ancient than Christianity. In the time of the synagogue, the scripture informs us that sacrifices were

offered for the dead. In the army of Judas Machabeus, several soldiers had taken away from the temples of Jamnia, contrary to the command of God, certain things consecrated to the idols, and had concealed them under their garments in the moment of the battle, in which all these soldiers perished. Their fault, which was considered the cause of their death, was discovered when they came to be buried. Judas Machabeus thinking that there was room to believe, either that they were not sufficiently aware of the law to understand the heinousness of their transgression, or that they had repented before God before they expired, caused a collection to be made, and the money to be sent to Jerusalem, that sacrifices might be there offered for their sins: "because he considered," says the scripture, "that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."¹

This passage was too direct and clear not to dazzle those, who undertook, in the 16th century, a new campaign against purgatory and prayers for the dead. They were persuaded that there was no other way to get rid of it, than to deny its divine authority, and accordingly they said, This book of Machabees was never included in the canon of the Jews. But why did they not also say that it never could have been therein enumerated, since that canon was closed by Esdras, long before the days of the Machabees? They said farther; some of the Fathers doubted the authority of that book. It would have been but common candor to add, that the greater number never doubted it at all; that it had been commonly read with the other divine Scriptures in the assemblies of the Christians; that the third council of Carthage, consecrating the ancient tradition, had ranked it among the inspired writings: "These are the books," it says, "which our Fathers taught us to read in the Church, under the title of divine and canonical Scriptures;" that St. Augustin² places it in the canon of the Scriptures, of which he gives an enumeration; and quotes it in proof against heretics; that it is ranked among

¹ 2 Machabees xii. 45, 46. ² Lib. de doct. Christ., c. 8.

the holy Scriptures by Innocent 1st in his reply to St. Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse in 405, and by Gelasius,¹ assisted by seventy bishops, in the decree of the Roman council in 494. We need not further dilate on the canonicity which this book can certainly claim; and which the reformers, and your Church after their example, would not have thought of disputing, but for the striking evidence of this passage. Leaving for a moment its divine authority out of the question, we shall carry our point equally well, whatever is attempted against us; for the followers of the reformation admit the books of Machabees at least as an authentic history. It is then an historical fact, that in the days of the Machabees, the Jews, those who offered sacrifice, the synagogue, were all of opinion that it was holy and salutary to offer sacrifices for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sins. Josephus plainly indicates² that the same belief prevailed in his time when he testifies that the Jews did not pray for those who had committed suicide. But undoubtedly they did not pray for those who were already in Abraham's bosom, where they had no need of prayers, nor for those who might be in hell, where prayers would be unavailing. Moreover, the object of their prayers was to obtain remission of sins for the dead, whom therefore they did not consider to be in Abraham's bosom, where nothing defiled had admittance, still less in hell, which was equally closed against pardon and hope. Therefore they believed in a middle state between both; and that middle state, (call it as you please,) we call by the name of *purgatory*. Now let us carry the argument a little farther. If this custom of offering sacrifice and praying for the dead, which presupposes the belief of our purgatory, was only an invention of Satan's, as Calvin would have it, and injurious to the cross of our Saviour, or, as your spiritual lords say more politely, a pleasant illusion, but vain and deceitful, how came it to pass, that our Saviour, finding it established, never rectified such an error among the Jews? How happened it, that he never cautioned his disciples against this illusory, false and superstitious tradition? Nay more: he

¹ B. I. on the care of the dead. ² Wars of the Jews, C. 91.

knew that all Christians would religiously observe it for ages to come; that while they daily renewed the sacrifice of his body and blood, they would earnestly pray for its application to the suffering souls of their brethren departed; he knew this, and yet did nothing to prevent them! He knew it, and yet he gave neither prohibition, nor admonition to obviate a practice, which, according to the language of the reformation, is superstitious, and derogatory to the merits of his cross!

2. Let us go farther, and say boldly that he even approved and recommended this practice to his disciples. It must of necessity have been so, if it be proved that the apostles instructed the Churches to pray for the dead. But this we can affirm with certainty on the principles which we have elsewhere established, and which I will here resume in a few words in the following simple argument. It is a fact, and all the liturgies in the world attest it, that the Christians of the fifth century not only those of the Catholic Church, but also those of separated communions, recited prayers for the dead in the celebration of the sacred mysteries. Now this unanimous concurrence of all Christians, this uniformity of all the liturgies necessarily supposes a common cause and origin, equally recognised by friends and enemies, Catholics and separatists; an authority even more sacred and incontestable in the eyes of the heretics than that of the Church, to which they refused submission; an authority in fine, which it is impossible to imagine and find elsewhere, than in the teaching of the apostles. To their teaching therefore, and that of their divine Master, must be referred the universal custom of praying for the dead in the primitive ages, the belief in the utility of such prayers, and that of purgatory which is inseparable from them. You will find at the end of this letter the proofs of the first proposition.¹ I do not repeat here the development of the second, because I have placed it before you already.²

This reasoning ought to suffice to convince us, even at the distance at which we are, that the practice of praying for the dead

¹ See the subsequent Appendix. ² See the second general proof of the Catholic doctrine on the Eucharist.

could only have been so universally established by the preaching of the apostles. Those who may not acknowledge all its force and solidity will not probably refuse to believe the positive deposition of enlightened witnesses of ancient times. You shall hear some of them, and learn from their mouths that this custom came from the apostles. Tertullian, who often speaks of praying for the dead, wishing to prove on one occasion that unwritten tradition ought to be admitted, quotes as an example certain ceremonies of baptism, the custom of receiving the Eucharist fasting, and the offerings made for the dead: "If," says he, "you ask me for some law of Scripture upon these customs, there is none. But you have as a supplement to the written law, tradition, which custom confirms, and which faith causes to be observed."¹ It is manifest that tradition in the time of Tertullian could be no other than that of the apostles, to whom he lived so near. St. Cyprian² who often alludes to prayers for the dead, writes these remarkable words: "Our predecessors prudently advised, that no brother, departing this life, should nominate any Churchman his executor; and should he do it, that no oblation should be made for him, nor sacrifice offered for his repose." The decision of the bishops, predecessors of St. Cyprian, supposes the practice of praying for the dead fully established, and thereby points out to us the apostolicity of its origin. St. Chrysostom gives it literally as follows:³ "It was ordained by the apostles, that, in celebrating the sacred mysteries, the dead should be remembered, for they well knew what advantage would thence be derived to them." St. Augustin, who composed a treatise on our duty towards the dead, in which praying for them is continually mentioned, expressed himself thus in a sermon;⁴ "Funeral pomp, the crowds that follow, sumptuous expenditure in the structure of mausoleums, without being of the smallest service to the dead, may afford some consolation to the living; but it cannot be doubted that, by the prayers of the holy Church, and by the salutary sacrifice, and by alms which are given for the repose of

¹ Lib. de corona milit. No. 3. ² Epist. 9. ³ Hom. 69 ad pop. Antioch. ⁴ Serm. 172.

their souls, the dead are helped; so that God may treat them more mercifully than their sins deserved. This the whole Church observes, which it received from the tradition of the Fathers, to pray for those who died in the communion of the body and blood of Christ, when, in their turn, they are commemorated at the sacrifice, and it is then announced, that the sacrifice is offered for them." In his work against heresies,¹ he ranks Acrius among the heretics, as St. Epiphanius had done before him, for having denied, contrary to the doctrine and tradition of every age, the utility of prayers for the dead; both thus testifying to us that it was considered in the Church among truths revealed and known by apostolical tradition. Finally, St. Isidore² teaches it in these words: "Since the oblation of sacrifice and prayer for the repose of the faithful departed are made in the Church throughout the world, we believe that the apostles left us this custom by tradition. For the Church everywhere observes it; and it is certain, that if she did not believe that the faithful could obtain the pardon of their sins, she would not give alms for the relief of their souls, and would not offer sacrifice to God for them."

I could fill twenty pages, were I so disposed, with what antiquity has said on this practice; but why need I take the pains to transcribe, and you the trouble to read, since Calvin³ himself acknowledges it in these terms: "It is more than thirteen centuries since it became the custom to pray for the dead." Would you learn what Luther said of it in the beginning of his career? "As for me, who believe strongly, I might even venture to say more, who know that purgatory exists, I can readily be persuaded that it is mentioned in the Scriptures. "All that I know of purgatory, is that souls are there in a state of suffering, and may be relieved by our works and prayers." Learn from what I am about to mention how to estimate these two leaders of the reformation: the latter who was first as to time, after thus positively assuring us that there is a purgatory, is found afterwards commending those who rejected it. "I applaud you," he wrote

¹ Her. 53, 75. ² Lib de offic. divin. cap. 15. ³ Lib. 2 Institut. c. 5. parag. 70. Dispute at Leipsic July 7, 1519.

to the Vaudois, "because while you deny purgatory, you thereby condemn the masses, vigils, cloisters, monasteries, and all that has been erected upon that primary imposture." Calvin, after acknowledging that this doctrine had been universally followed for more than thirteen centuries, adds that "all have been led into the error; that a cry ought every where to be made, not only with the voice, but with the throat and lungs, that purgatory is a pernicious fiction of Satan, which annuls the cross of Christ, does an injury to the mercy of God, and is the destruction of faith." What are we to think of these two worthies? Shall I tell you the feeling which they excite in me? It is that of pity; for the gospel forbids me to indulge in contempt.

Certainly I do not impute to the whole body of Lutherans the opinions of their head. I am taught to do them more justice by one of their most learned and virtuous writers, whose testimony I feel pleasure in making known to you: "One portion of the Protestant Church, founded upon the apology of the confession of Augsbourg, also approves of praying for the dead, and in fact prays for them. We are very glad to learn from M. Molanus," says Bossuet, "that one portion of the Lutherans not only approves but practises this kind of prayer. This is a remnant of those ancient sentiments which we honor in Lutheranism."¹ This passage of the apology, on which the Lutherans rely with great reason, is expressed in the following terms: "We do not hinder any one from praying for the dead."²

Although your lords in 1562 took upon themselves to declare in their twenty second article that the doctrine of purgatory appeared repugnant to the holy Scriptures, truth, more potent than their opinion, has not failed to find apologists in your Church among your most distinguished divines; I will quote some of them, and first bishop Forbes:³ "Let not the ancient practice of praying and making oblations for the dead, received throughout the universal Church of Christ, almost from the very time of the apostles, be any more rejected by Protestants as unlawful,

¹ *Projet de reunion*, Posthumous works of Bossuet, vol. I. p. 90. ² Do. p. 213.

³ Discourse on purgatory.

or vain. Let them reverence the judgment of the primitive Church, and admit a practice strengthened by the uninterrupted profession of so many ages: and let them, as well in public as private, observe this rite, although not as absolutely necessary or commanded by the divine law, yet as lawful and likewise profitable, and as always approved by the universal Church; that by this means, at length, a piece so earnestly desired by all learned and honest men may be restored to the Christian world." The learned bishop often reverts to these ideas in his discourse: he observes, after St. Epiphanius and St. Augustin, that the contrary opinion of Acrius was condemned; and after having shewn that, according to the doctrine of the Fathers, the remission of venial sins could be obtained after death, and that there are moreover probable reasons for thinking so, he adds: "so we may maintain the prayers of the Church for the souls departed, to be beneficial, and not in vain, inasmuch as that practice of the Church, of praying for the dead, is derived, as Chrysostom confesses, and is very probable, from the institution of the apostles." Such is the opinion of a clever theologian, who with a view to promote a union of the Christian communions, had profoundly studied antiquity.

Here are two epitaphs which will unfold to you the ideas of two other divines, in no way inferior to him whom I have just quoted. They had themselves composed their own epitaphs in Latin. "The remains of Isaac, (Barrow,) bishop of St. Asaphs, deposited in the hands of the Lord, in the hope of a joyful resurrection solely by the merits of Christ. O all ye that pass by into the house of the Lord! the house of prayer, pray for your fellow servant, that he may find mercy in the day of the Lord!" — "Here lies the body of Herbert Thorndike, formerly a prebendary of this collegiate Church, (Westminster) who in his life time endeavored by prayer and study to discover the right method of reforming the Church. Do thou, reader, implore for him rest and a happy resurrection in Christ."

"I spoke severally," says the duchess of York,¹ "to two of

¹ In her *Declaration*.

the best bishops we have in England; (Sheldon, archbishop of Canterbury, and Blandford, bishop of Worcester) who both told me there were many things in the Roman Church which it were very much to be wished we had kept: as confession, which was, no doubt commanded by God: that praying for the dead was one of the ancient things in Christianity: that for their parts they did it daily, though they would not own it."¹ That princes acted more courageously; although she had to make great sacrifices, she did not hesitate to profess the truth, as soon as she had the happiness to know it.²

I conclude this letter with an observation which I might have placed at the end of each of the preceding. Is it not passing strange, that in every point which we have so far discussed together, I have invariably found those at variance with the primitive Church, who so loudly professed to bring us back to her doctrines? On what then will they keep their word? And when shall we see them agree with antiquity? They have seen, and acknowledged that in the most remote ages prayers were offered for the dead in all the Churches of the world; and yet,

¹ Considering your 39 articles, I have often thought that in the Convocation of 1562, there needed no less light and science to repress the mania of that innovating age, than character and disinterestedness to resist to their face a ministry determined to legalize schism and heresy in the kingdom. These articles would have been drawn up very differently, if instead of Elizabeth's spiritual lords, such men had been seen seated in that Convocation as Andrews, Forbes, Montague, Taylor, Pearson, Bull, Cosin, Sheldon, Samuel Parker, Beveridge, Hooker, Heylin, Thorndike, Collyer, Grabe, Stephens, &c., or to speak more properly, and do them ample justice, these noble and learned personages would, no doubt, have scorned to take a seat there. Who, in fact, could be persuaded, that they would ever have consented to lend themselves to the views of the ministry, and intrude themselves into the sees of the lawful bishops, who, though born and brought up in the schism, were sensible of its evil and lamented it, and for the most part devoted to their labors and their pens to bring back their Church to Catholic unity?

² In the form of prayer published by the archbishop of Canterbury, for the thanksgiving ordered by the king, and appointed for the 29th November, 1798, for the victory of Aboukir, I observed with pleasure the following words, which indicate something like a return to ancient principles: "And for those, whom in this righteous cause, thy Providence permits to fall, receive, we pray thee, their souls to thy mercy."

behold! in spite of their engagement made and proclaimed to all people; that they would follow in the steps of antiquity, they deprive the dead of the relief of prayers! And not only do they in this abandon the primitive Church; but even,—pretending all the while to restore her to honor,—they rise up against her after so many centuries: they resist to her face, as if they had beheld her, and had existed in her time. They met with a man, and one man only who in the fourth century, declared war against her for her pious regard for the dead; and they ran to this man, and stood by his side: and they preferred one Acrius to the universal Church which condemned him! How astonishing is such a proceeding! what disgrace! what inconsistency of principles and conduct! But Sir, I have frequently reminded you, that variations and inconsistencies are inherent in the very basis of the Reformation: there is not, and there never will be any firm and stable method, but to repose on an infallible authority, which alone can render the faith of a Christian upright and immoveable.

APPENDIX.

On Praying for the Dead.

“LET us be mindful of our fathers, and brethren, and of the faithful who are departed out of this world in the orthodox faith: let us pray the Lord to absolve them, to remit their sins, and their transgressions, to make them worthy to partake of eternal felicity with the just who conformed themselves to the divine will.” *

Another Nestorian liturgy of Malabar presents us with the following words, in an admirable prayer; “O Lord, God of hosts! receive this oblation also for the whole Catholic Church, for the priests and Catholic princes, for those who groan in poverty, oppression, misery and tears; for the faithful departed, &c.”

And the following words from another prayer of the same liturgy: “Strengthen, O my God! the peace and repose of all parts of the world..... Destroy wars, remove battles beyond the extremities of the earth: dissipate the nations who desire war..... Relax also the bonds, the sins and all the debts of those who are dead: we beseech thee by thy infinite mercy and goodness.”

The liturgy of the Chaldean Nestorians: “Receive this oblation, O my God! for all those who weep, who are sick, who suffer under oppression, calamities, and infirmities; and for all those whom death has separated from us.....”

And in another prayer of the same liturgy: “Forgive the trespasses and sins of those who are dead; we beg it of thee by thy grace and thy eternal mercies.”

In the beautiful thanksgiving which the Nestorians make after the celebration of the mysteries, the dead are never forgotten: “Bless, O my God! the souls departed, forgive their sins.”

The Nestorians, differing from the generality of the Orientals, have a particular mass for the dead: I find in it a benediction for them which ought to be copied at full length; but I refer you for it to Le Brun, Tom. 3. p. 537.

On the famous inscription found in China, and which bears witness that priests from Syria had preached the gospel there with success in the seventh century, these words may be read in the eighth column: “They perform prayers seven times in the day, which are very useful to the living and to the dead.”

The Armenians, like the greater part of the Orientals, have no particular mass for the dead, as our canon is not changed for such masses. But the Armenians

* Liturgy of the Nestorians of Malabar.

when they celebrate for a soul departed, says: "Remember O Lord! be merciful and propitious to the souls of the dead, and in particular to those, for whom we offer this sacrifice."

Their liturgy exhibits very beautiful prayers for the living and dead in general: the deacon addresses himself thus to all the faithful: "We require that mention be made in this sacrifice of all the faithful, in general men and women, young and old, who departed with faith in Jesus Christ." The choir answers: "Be mindful, O Lord! and have mercy on them." The priest alone: "Grant them repose, light, and a place among thy saints in thy heavenly kingdom, and make them worthy of thy mercy. Be mindful O Lord! and have mercy on the soul of thy servant N. according to thy great mercy..... Be mindful also, O Lord! of those who have recommended themselves to our prayers, living or dead: grant them in reward solid goods which will not pass away."

The Greeks of the patriarchate of Constantinople have used for more than eleven hundred years, two liturgies under the names of St. Basil and St. Chrysostom: they contain the following recommendation of the dead: "We offer to thee also for the repose and the remission of the soul of thy servant, N. in a place of light, from which grief and lamentation are far removed: and make him to rest, where he may see around him the light of thy countenance," &c.

It is to be observed that this liturgy is followed, not only by the Greek Churches of the Ottoman Empire which are dependent upon the patriarch of Constantinople, but also by those in the West, at Rome, in Calabria, Apulia, Georgia, Mingrelia, Bulgaria and the whole of Russia. On the belief and practice of the Russians and the Greeks in general, we have a very remarkable testimony in their great catechism, called at first the orthodox confession of the Russians, and to which the patriarchs of the Greek rite have since given the title of the Orthodox Confession of the Eastern Church.* On the seventh article of the creed, we read that souls, after death, cannot obtain salvation and remission of their sins by their repentance or any act on their part, but by the good works and prayers of the faithful, and above all, by the unbloody sacrifice which the Church offers daily for the living and dead."

The liturgy of Alexandria, or of the Jacobite Copts, makes a commemoration of the dead as follows: "Be mindful also, O Lord! of all who have slept and reposed in the priesthood, and in every rank of the secular state. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to grant rest to the souls of them all, in the bosom of the saints Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Lead them into a verdant pasture, to the waters of refreshment, into a paradise of delight, far from which are removed griefs of heart, sadness and sighs in the light of thy saints." Here the deacons recite the names of the dead, and the priest continues: "Command those, O Lord whose souls thou hast received, to repose in this place....." He returns to the dead in a subsequent prayer: "Preserve the living by thy angel of peace, and grant, O my God! that the souls of the dead may repose in the bosom of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the paradise of felicity."

The liturgy of the Abyssinians or Ethiopians: "Have mercy, O my God! on the souls of thy servants, men and women, who have been fed with thy body and blood, and have slept at death in thy faith...." The priest in a long and beautiful

* 1643--1662--1372.

prayer, after the consecration, says again: "Save eternally those who do thy will: console widows, support orphans, and vouchsafe to receive those who have slept and are departed in the faith."

The liturgy of the orthodox Syrians and Jacobites: the deacon says: "Again and again, we commemorate all the faithful departed, those who are departed in the true faith, from this holy altar, and from this town, and from every country: those who in the true faith have slept and are come to thee, the God and Lord of spirits, and of all flesh. We pray, we beseech, we entreat Christ our God, who has taken their souls and spirits to himself, that through the innumerable acts of his mercy, he would render them worthy to receive the pardon of their offences, and the remission of their sins, and would bring us and them to his kingdom in heaven. Wherefore let us cry aloud and say thrice, *Kyrie eleison*." The priest bowing down prays for the dead, and afterwards raising his voice, he says: "O Lord God of spirits and of all flesh, be mindful of all whom we commemorate who are gone out of this life, in the orthodox faith; grant rest to their souls;.... and make them worthy of that joy, which is found in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: where the light of thy countenance shines in splendor, where there are no sorrows, no distresses, no lamentations. Impute not to them their sins. Enter not into judgment with thy servants, because no man living shall be justified in thy sight; nor is any one of the human race free from the guilt of sin, or pure from stain, but only our Lord Jesus Christ, thy only begotten Son, through whom we also hope to obtain mercy, and remission of sins, which is given through him, both to us and to them."

The ancient liturgy known by the name of St. James,* quoted by the council in *Trullo*, and explained in the fourth century by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, puts into the mouth of the priest the following prayer for the dead: "O Lord our God, be mindful of all the souls whom we have commemorated, and those whom we have omitted to commemorate; of all those who have departed in the true faith, from Abel the just till the present time: make them to repose in the land of the living, in thy kingdom, in thy delights of paradise, in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob our holy fathers, where there are no more sorrows, lamentations of mourning; where the light of thy countenance which beholds all, shines in all splendor."

St. Cyril* explained it thus to his neophytes: "When we celebrate the sacrifice, we pray in the last place for those who are departed from among us, considering that their souls receive great assistance from the tremendous sacrifice of our altars..... If the relations of some poor exile were to present the prince with a crown of gold, to appease his anger, it would doubtless be a successful means of inducing him to shorten the time or mitigate the punishment of the exile. And thus it is that by praying for the dead during the sacrifice, we offer to God, not a crown of gold, but Jesus Christ, his Son, who died for our sins, in order to render him propitious to them and to us, who in his nature is most inclined to clemency."

The Mozarabic liturgy in Spanish: "We offer thee O Sovereign Father! this unspotted host for thy holy Church, in satisfaction for the sinful world, for the purification of our souls, for the health of the infirm, for the repose and pardon of

* A long time in use all over the East. † Catech. Myst. 5.

the faithful departed, that changing their abode in those mournful habitations, they may enjoy the happy society of the just."

"Assemble in the cemeteries," says the Apostolic Constitutions:* "read there the sacred books, sing there psalms for the martyrs, for all the saints and for your brethren who are dead in the Lord, and afterwards offer the Eucharist."

It would be superfluous to quote the liturgies of the Latin Church, of which no one entertains a doubt. We can most positively assert that before the 16th century, there did not exist in the Christian Churches, any liturgies, in which commemorations and prayers for the dead were not to be found.

* B. VI. ch. 30.

LETTER XIV.

Invocation of Saints.

I always recollect with pleasure, Sir, having often heard your countrymen recommend themselves to one another's prayers, and sometimes also, those, with whom I was more intimately connected, say to me on taking leave; Adieu, pray for me. I never failed immediately to comply with their request; and in so doing, felt an inexpressible pleasure, which however was always succeeded by sorrow and sadness of soul. "How affecting is this recommendation, said I to myself, and how it savors of ancient and primitive manners! It reminds one of the Apostles, and shews that we still practice a lesson which they so frequently taught their disciples! But, alas! these people hesitate not to beg prayers from me, a poor and miserable sinner, full of imperfections and loaded, God knows, with so many sins; and they would consider it a crime to beg the prayers and intercession of the saints in heaven! they pronounce me highly criminal in addressing to them the same invocation! and treat it as vain, superstitious, and sometimes even, idolatrous! Yet, Englishmen boast of possessing more enlightened minds and cultivated reason than people of other countries; and in many respects I willingly recognize their just claim to pre-eminence; on this subject, however, no such concession can be made: for, undoubtedly, the opposite is the fact: it must therefore follow that they do not give to this subject the attention that it deserves."

In fact, you are told from your infancy, in order to prejudice you against the Catholic doctrine, that it is perfectly useless to invoke the saints in heaven, because they cannot hear us: you: have perhaps even been told by some that, could they hear you, it would be criminal to invoke them because it would be making many mediators, whereas we ought to acknowledge but one; and because, to suppose in the saints a power to assist us, would be

to turn them into the demigods of paganism, and under new names, to introduce that idolatry which Jesus Christ came to destroy. These notions are impressed upon the minds of Protestants, from their tenderest infancy; they grow with their growth, are strengthened with their advancing years, and generally attend them through life, because it is not the fashion in the world to examine into religious matters. But you, Sir, who have been rescued by grace from that indifference in which most men are dangerously slumbering, you, who have had the grace to feel that, of all affairs, the affair of your salvation is the most important, listen again with patience to what I have to say on this subject; and I trust you will soon become divested of the prejudices you have imbibed.

It is useless, you have been told, to have recourse to the saints in heaven, since they cannot hear you. And how do they come to this decision? what proofs have they for so bold an assertion? If they merely pretend that of themselves, by any quality or property of their nature, they cannot hear our prayers, and penetrate into our interior thoughts, or the secret motions of our hearts, I agree with them: but this is not sufficient to uproot the foundation of our invocation: to effect this, it must moreover be maintained that God cannot communicate this knowledge to them. Now, to deny such a power in God, would be an extravagant folly and blasphemy. The Holy Scripture¹ testifies that he has often communicated such knowledge to his servants on earth. Eliseus sees, as if he were present, what passes between Giezi and Naaman: "Was not my heart present, when the man turned back from his chariot to meet thee? So now thou hast received money, and received garments, &c..... But the leprosy of Naaman shall also stick to thee and to thy seed for ever." The same prophet² knows what is said in the secret council of the king of Syria, who thinks that he is betrayed by his confidential friends: "And calling together his servants, he said: "Why do you not tell me who it is that betrays me to the king of Israel? And one of his servants said: No one, my

¹ IV. Kings, v. 26, 27. ² IV. Kings, vi. 11, 12.

lord, O king! but Eliseus the prophet, that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel all the words that thou speakest in thy privy chamber." St. Peter¹ knew the fraudulent transaction of Ananias and Sapphira, who, confident of being undiscovered, wished to have the merit of a generous contribution of their whole property, while at the same time they withheld a part of the sum for which it was sold.

If God has revealed to his servants upon earth the knowledge of what was deliberating and doing in their absence, why should he not be able to favor his elect in heaven with a similar revelation? Shall the distance of place prevent it? This to the Almighty is nothing. Shall the privation of bodily organs in the saints in heaven be an obstacle? Such a privation, so far from being an obstacle, would afford a greater facility. The organs of the body oppress and shackle the faculties of the soul, which, when once disengaged from gross and lumpish matter, must acquire more energy and preceptibility. "For we know in part," says St. Paul,² "and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." Spirits acquire a purer penetration, when they are freed from the body, because the carnal part no longer presents obstacles to them.³ It is therefore certain that in the bosom of glory the blessed spirits are more susceptible of knowledge than they were in their earthly tabernacles; and if God has communicated to them upon earth the knowledge of what the eyes could not see, nor the ears hear, with much more reason is he able immediately to reveal it to them in heaven.

That this is possible cannot be denied; for the Scripture shews its possibility plainly enough. You remember what is there said of Lazarus and the rich man:⁴ the latter addresses his prayer to Abraham from the bottom of hell, and Abraham becomes so well acquainted with the purport of his request that he appropriately replies to it. If a prayer put up from the infernal abode could penetrate to limbo, with much more reason shall it pass

¹ Acts, v. 3. ² I Cor. xiii. 9, 10. ³ St. Clement of Alex. *Strom.* B. VI. ⁴ St. Luke, xvi. 19.

from earth to heaven. Observe also that Abraham tells Dives that his brethren have Moses and the prophets, and that if they will not hear them, neither will they hear, if any one should be sent to them from another world. Abraham therefore must have known that Moses and the prophets had existed and had left writings behind them for the instruction of their posterity. The Almighty having revealed this knowledge to Abraham, why should he not reveal to his glorified saints the knowledge of the prayers that we here below address to them in heaven? Perhaps it may be said that this story of the rich man and the poor beggar is but a parable. I should feel no difficulty in allowing as much, although I might consider it as a fact, in company with St. Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, St. Gregory, St. Ambrose, St. Augustin, and many others. But allowing it to be a parable, it cannot go on an impossibility: and Jesus Christ would never have represented Abraham as replying to the petition made to him, and as instructed in events occurring upon earth long after this time, if this kind of knowledge had been repugnant to the nature of things.

Our Lord teaches us that there is joy in heaven when a sinner does penance.¹ By whom is this joy experienced, unless by all the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem? For there is no exception made; it is all heaven that rejoices. Therefore the conversion that takes place in this world must be known to the blessed in the other. It is indeed true that Jesus Christ says almost immediately afterwards that there shall be joy before the angels of God over the repenting sinner; but the addition by which he particularly mentions the angels, does not destroy what he has just said respecting the heavenly inhabitants in general. It would not be at all unreasonable to suppose that they were all comprised under the denomination of angels: for Christ teaches us that the glorified saints are *like to the angels*, and we find them in Scripture performing the same functions and enjoying the same qualities as the angels. Open the book of the Apocalypse: St. John² represents to us the whole of the saints un-

¹ St. Luke, xv. 7. ² St. John, v.

der the name and appearance of twenty-four ancients prostrate before the throne of Jesus Christ, offering him, like the angels, golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the faithful upon earth. They present them; therefore they must have received—must have heard them; and we may without fear address fresh supplications to them, that by their hands they may ascend like an agreeable incense before the throne of the Lamb. The same apostle¹ describes the souls of the martyrs as being acquainted with the state of the Church and the persecutions which they prayed might terminate, and yet being given to understand that these persecutions should continue a little time longer and also the reason of this continuance. At the fall of Babylon, the apostles and martyrs are invited to praise God for his judgments; and immediately canticles of admiration resound through the heavenly mansions.² And in a preceding chapter³ you may read this magnificent promise of Jesus Christ: “And he that shall overcome and keep my works unto the end (this evidently refers to those who have finished their first career and begun that which never shall end) I will give him power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and as the vessel of the potter they shall be broken, as I also have received from my Father.” Can any one obtain over nations a power equal to that of our Saviour, so as to chastise and crush them under his sceptre, unless he knows what is going on among them, what is done, said, devised and desired by them? Let us hear no more then of rejecting the invocation of saints, under the pretext that they cannot hear our prayers. Let Christians of every denomination at length become sensible how improper it is to invent ideas and fancies so totally at variance with what revelation teaches, and let us hear no more of these fictitious and imaginary impossibilities.

But, granting it to be possible for the saints to hear our prayers, it would still be criminal, they will tell you, to pray to them, because we are only to pray to our one and only Mediator, Jesus Christ. Truly, they, who hold out such language, must reflect

¹ St. John, vi. 9, 10, 11. ² xviii. 20. ³ ii. 26.

very little before they speak. I should be glad to ask them, whether they think that the Mediatorship of our Saviour is affected when they recommend themselves to one another's prayers on earth. Undoubtedly not. Then why should it suffer injury, when we recommend ourselves to the prayers of the saints? Whether we address ourselves to those who are yet with us, or to those who are no longer among us, our request is exactly the same; we say both to one and the other: Pray for us, and nothing more. In both cases, we invoke the same mark of interest and benevolence of our friends and brethren. The only difference is that you confine your prayer to those who are with you in this world, whereas we extend it to those who are gone before us into the next. But, certainly, this difference in the state of the persons, makes no difference in the nature of the petition. If it is innocent in regard of the former, it is not less so in respect of the latter. If, by addressing ourselves to the saints in heaven, we multiply our mediators, you also multiply them, by addressing yourselves to your friends on earth. When, in compliance with your request, they pray for you, they become as much your patrons, advocates, intercessors and mediators as the saints in heaven are ours. Perhaps these titles of patrons, intercessors, and mediators, offend you. If so, do away with them; we care but little about them; words are of little importance; it is the thing itself, and that only, that we contend for.

Rigorously speaking, we have all but one Mediator, the God-Man, who has redeemed us, who alone could do it, alone has been able to cleanse us from our sins in his precious blood, alone could intercede efficaciously for us in heaven; from him and his merits alone our prayers and good works receive all their value; it is only through him that they can become agreeable to his Father, only through him that they must reach him, whether we ourselves present them directly to him, or whether, to render them more acceptable, we employ the ministry of his elect.—“Christians,” says St. Augustin,¹ “recommend themselves to each other's prayers; but he, who intercedes for all, without

¹ Lib. II, *Contra Parmen.* C. VI.

standing in need of being interceded for by any one, he is the only and true Mediator."

And yet the same doctor every where teaches the invocation of saints, and in the beautiful prayers he has left us, he calls them patrons and advocates. St. Gregory of Nazianzum¹ explains the mediation of Jesus Christ in an admirable manner, which can only apply to our Saviour, and yet makes no difficulty in taking mediation in a sense infinitely inferior, when he says that "the holy martyrs are the mediators of this elevation which renders us divine." St. Athanasius, who will not be accused of slighting the sovereign mediatorship of our Saviour, invokes the Blessed Virgin, under the title of patron, our lady and our queen, and St. Chrysostom calls the saints, "defenders and patrons of of the masters of the world, who invoke their intercession at their tombs." St. Basil was not ignorant that every grace comes from God through the all-powerful intercession of his Son, and yet he asks the prayers of the forty martyrs, and calls them "our defence, our refuge, the protectors and guardians of the human race." This is the language of antiquity. You will soon hear it in the passages I am about to place before you. Why then should we fear to say as our fathers and masters have said? "Holy martyr! restore me my Son, you know why I weep." How would your teachers be scandalized at this short and lively prayer of a mother in mourning to St. Stephen. I am very fearful that they would pronounce her to be outrageously idolatrous. But St. Augustin, who mentions the circumstance, does not think of finding any fault with the woman, as if she knew not to whom it belonged, to restore her son and hear the intercession of his martyr. Let us not be more fastidious: let us be less captious about the words, and attend more to their evident purport. Your Protestant countrymen would do well to attend to the sense and assume the language of antiquity, instead of squeamishly affecting a grammatical exactness, and harping upon expressions the sense of which is evident to every one. For the rest: if any of our divines pushed on by blind zeal, have per-

¹ *Orat.* XXXVI.

mitted themselves to proceed to such lengths as to attribute to the saints the power and efficacy belonging to Jesus Christ alone, know that we do not vindicate any such excess, and that it would be unjust to render the Catholic body responsible for the exaggerations of misguided individuals.

In order to ascertain our doctrine and be thoroughly convinced of the essential difference we make between the intercession of the saints and the mediation of our Saviour, read the definition of the council of Trent.¹ Were it not rather long, I would transcribe it for you, so admirable do I consider it, and so well adapted to satisfy the most fastidious dispositions. Read our catechisms, our books of liturgies and our litanies, in which is so distinctly marked the difference between the prayers made to God and those made to the saints. To the saints it is always, "Pray for us, intercede for us;" to the persons of the Trinity, "Have mercy on us, hear us; Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world; spare us, have mercy on us." Again, cast a glance upon our CONFITEOR, a prayer so familiar to all Catholics, and in which, after having confessed our faults to God, the angels, the saints and our brethren present, in order to humble ourselves before God and all his creatures in heaven and on earth, we continue: "I beseech thee blessed Mary ever virgin, the blessed Michael the archangel, the blessed John the baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, and you, my brethren, to pray to the Lord our God for me." You may observe that we do not say any thing more to our brethren in heaven than to our brethren on earth. There is not a prayer or collect in our liturgy but which concludes with this general form by which the divinity of our Saviour is loudly proclaimed: "Through Jesus Christ, thy only Son, our Lord who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end." Who does not see, by this solemn conclusion of all our prayers, that we hope for the success and the fruit of our prayers solely through the merits of our Saviour, and the intercession of his name, the only name under heaven given to man, whereby he may be saved.

¹Session xxv.

After this simple and incontestable exposition, shall there be any one found henceforth so unjust, so full of effrontery, as to tax us with turning the saints into demigods, and re-introducing idolatry into Christianity! Those only are idolators who pay to the creature the honor and worship due to God. So far is our invocation from presenting any thing of the kind, that it fixes them their station in such a manner as that it would be impious and blasphemous to address Jesus Christ as we address them, or to address them as we address Christ,—“Neither we, nor the ancients, nor any truly pious Christian have ever besought Christ to pray to the Father for us.”

From whom do you think I have borrowed these words? From a celebrated minister¹ among the Calvinists of France. He spoke true: never has such a prayer proceeded from a truly Christian mouth; it would be an impiety, a blasphemy. The same minister continues to explain with antiquity and the Catholic Church the dignity of the meditation of Christ. “Eternal Father,” says he, “Jesus Christ is the Lord and dispenser of all the graces which his blood has merited for us. This powerful king of the universe dispenses them as he pleases. His subjects do not look upon him as a mere intercessor, but as their king, their Lord and God, and they pray that what they ask may be granted to them by his will and his power.” Yes, and we have also said and shall ever say that Jesus Christ is the dispenser and distributor of all his graces; that he disposes of them as he pleases, and gives them with the authority of a lord and master; for they are his own, being acquired and purchased by the price of his blood. His prayer is in him but a perpetual will and desire to sanctify us; his all-powerful intercession is found in the eternal virtue of his sacrifice, in the presence of that sacred body which has been our victim, and in that humanity which being once assumed he retains for ever. To intercede, it suffices, says the apostle, that he should appear for us before God. But the saints are but mere intercessors, who have every thing to ask for, and nothing to give. If they employ themselves in our fa-

¹ Daille.

vor, it is never in their own name, but in the name of Christ, always through him, through his blood and merits. They intercede as servants, who are in favor with their master, but yet who are nothing but servants: like friends happy and crowned, yet happy through his merits, crowned through his kindness, indebted for their happiness to his graces; in fine as impotent and humble creatures before him, with the words and in the attitude of suppliants. Is it not therefore as clear as the day that this doctrine places the saints at an infinite distance below Jesus Christ; that it places them in heaven in the same rank of inferiority and dependence that they occupied upon earth, and leave them eternally in the order of creatures, employed in offering to their divine Redeemer immortal acts of thanksgiving for the happiness they possess by his bounty, and in ardent supplications that he would vouchsafe to make us partakers with them of eternal glory. Who would imagine that a belief, so visibly repugnant to idolatry, should ever have been set down for idolatrous? They who have thus characterized our belief in this particular must either have disdained to learn it correctly, or, if they ever understood it, they must have done much worse—they must designedly and malignantly have misrepresented it. “If the Roman Church is idolatrous,” they have said, “our separation is not a schism.” And actually they have represented it to be idolatrous. But what have they gained by so doing? So far from justifying their schism, they have added to the weight of their offences before God and impartial men; for to this last crime the most unpardonable of all, they have added that of calumny.

This calumny is much more audacious and detestable than might at first sight appear, inasmuch as it applies also to the primitive Church, from which we receive the invocation of saints; so that, if this practice be idolatrous, the source and the crime would be derived to us from those golden ages, of which your reformers pretended to be the admirers and imitators. St. Irenæus shews us in the B. Virgin the *advocate* of the human race, by teaching in what manner she became the advocate of the mother of all mankind: he opposes the disobedience of Eve to

the obedience of Mary: As Eve was seduced to fly from God, so was the Virgin Mary induced to obey him, that she might become the *advocate* of her that had fallen."¹

"I will fall down on my knees," exclaimed Origen,² "and not presuming, on account of my crimes, to present my prayer to God, I will invoke all the saints to my assistance. O ye saints of heaven, I beseech you with a sorrow full of sighs and tears; fall at the feet of the Lord of Mercies for me a miserable sinner." I find again this beautiful invocation of his to holy Job:³ "Pray for us unfortunate creatures, that the mercy of the terrible God may deign to protect us in all our tribulations, and in the midst of the snares spread by our enemy."

"Plato observes," says Eusebius of Cæsarea,⁴ "that they who nobly die in battle, shall be venerated as heroes, and their monuments be renowned. How does this apply to the deaths of those friends of God, who are justly called the soldiers of genuine piety! For it is our practice to honor their sepulchre, there to utter our prayers and our vows, and to venerate their blessed souls; and this we say is justly done."

"Hear now, O daughter of David! incline thine ear to our prayers..... We raise our cry to thee. Remember us, O most holy virgin! and for the feeble eulogiums we give thee, give us some share in thy precious riches and thy treasure of graces, thou who art full of grace..... Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Queen and mother of God, intercede for us."⁵ The conclusion of this ancient invocation reminds us of our angelical salutation, the first part of which consists of the words of the angel and of St. Elizabeth in the Gospel, and the latter part, of the prayer added by the Church. Whole pages would be necessary were I to transcribe the invocations to the B. Virgin, which are found in St. Basil, in St. Ephrem particularly, and St. Gregory of Nazianzum, St. Chrysostom, St. Ambrose and St. Augustin. St. Epiphanius⁶ says with accuracy and precision: "Let Mary therefore be honored; but the Father, Son

¹ Advers. Hæres. L. V. C. XIX. ² On the Lamentations. ³ B. II. on Job.

⁴ Prepar. Evang. L. XIII. C. XI. ⁵ St. Athanasius on the Gospel. ⁶ Adv. Collyridianos Hæc. LIX. sive LXXIX.

and Holy Ghost alone be adored." And St. Gregory the Great is not less exact in this short prayer: "Saviour of the world, save us: holy mother of God, Virgin Mary, pray for us."

To proceed from the invocation of Mary to that of the saints, hear in what terms our ancestors addressed them: "And you, happy creatures, glorious martyrs, assist me by your prayers, that I may find mercy in the day of judgment..... Being touched at my misery, assist me before the throne of the Divine Majesty, that through your prayers I may obtain the grace of salvation, and become partaker with you of eternal beatitude."¹

"We stand in need of many graces," says St. Gregory, of Nyssa, to the martyr Theodorus, "intercede for your country before our common master and sovereign. We are apprehensive of great miseries and of the utmost perils. The cruel Scythian approaches and threatens war. O soldier, fight for us: martyr, speak boldly for us your countrymen. Although you be raised above the world, you always know the crosses, afflictions and necessities of our human condition. Ask peace for us, that our sacred assemblies may not be interrupted, that the the barbarian, in his fury, may not turn against the temples and altars, and trample under his sacrilegious feet their sacred appurtenances. We acknowledge that we are indebted to you for our preservation till this time: continue for the time to come your protection and defence. And if a host of prayers be necessary, assemble the choirs of your brother martyrs, and supplicate altogether for us. The united voices of so many just will cover the sins of the people. Admonish Peter, solicit Paul, call John, the beloved disciple: and let them intercede for the Churches which they themselves have founded."

St. Gregory of Nazianzum, besought St. Cyprian, St. Athanasius and St. Basil, "to look down from on high upon him, to govern his conversation and his life, to assist him in feeding his flock, to give him a more perfect knowledge of the Trinity, in fine to draw him to where they were, and to place him among them and the other blessed saints."²

¹ St. Ephrem, *on the Martyrs*. ² Paneg. of S. S. Cyprian, Athan. and Basil.

St. Asterius, disciple of St. Chrysostom, introduces into his discourse one of the faithful addressing Phocas the martyr, in these words.¹ “You who have suffered for Jesus Christ, pray for our sufferings and our maladies. You have yourself prayed to the martyrs, before your own martyrdom; then you found what you sought; now that you possess, give to us.”

“Where then is the tomb of Alexander the Great?”² said the eloquent patriarch of Constantinople. “Tell me, if you can, the day of his death. But the tombs of the servants of Jesus Christ are illustrious in the city which is the mistress of the world; the days of their deaths are known to us all, and are become festival days throughout the world..... The tombs of the servants of Him that was crucified are more magnificent than the palaces of kings, not so much by the beauty of their structure, though that is not wanting, as by the concourse of the people. For even he who wears purple comes to embrace these tombs, and laying aside his pageantry and pomp, standing, prays to the saints to assist him by their prayers. He who wears the diadem, chooses a fisherman and a maker of tents, even after their deaths, for his patrons. Will you say that Jesus Christ is dead, he whose servants, even after their decease, are the patrons and protectors of the kings of the earth? Let us go frequently,” says he in another place, “to visit the holy martyrs; let us touch their shrines; let us embrace with faith their holy relics, in order to draw down some blessings upon us. For as brave soldiers, shewing to kings the wounds they have received in his service, speak to him with confidence; so likewise do they, shewing their dissevered heads, obtain all that they desire from the King of heaven.”

The great bishop of Milan testifies by his example and his instructions the advantages procured by having recourse to the saints: “And, that my prayer may become more efficacious, I invoke the suffrage of the blessed Virgin Mary..... I implore the intercession of the apostles.....the assistance of the martyrs.....the supplications of the confessors.”³—Let us supplicate the “angels who have been given to us for our guardians,” says he elsewhere,

¹ Hom. on *Phocas*. ² Hom. XXVI. on II. Cor. ³ Preparation on death.

“let us supplicate the martyrs, who can intercede for our sins, who in their own blood have washed the sins they might have committed. For they are the martyrs of God; they preside over us, inspect our life and observe our conduct. Blush not to admit them as the intercessors of our infirmity, who during the days of their trial and triumph experienced the infirmity of the flesh.”¹

“This passage,” said a Protestant,² “is very hard, too hard indeed to be explained.” Are the preceding ones less so? What do you think of the following epitaph? “Farewell, O Paul, support by thy prayers the extreme old age of thy admirer. Faith and works have united thee to God; being present, thou wilt more easily obtain of him, whatever thou shalt petition for.”³

St. Augustin⁴ bears testimony that it was customary with the Christians to say humbly to each of the saints: “Remember me.” Who ever invoked their intercession with more devotion than himself? “Holy and immaculate V. Mary, mother of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, deign to intercede in my behalf before him whose temple thou hast deserved to be. Celestials choirs of angels, arch-angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, priests, levites, monks, virgins and all the just! by him who has elected you, and the contemplation of whom forms your felicity, I entreat you to supplicate the Lord for me, a miserable sinner, that I may escape the rage of the devil and death eternal.”⁵ Then immediately addressing his prayer to God, he says: “O my God, vouchsafe to grant me life eternal, according to thy clemency and thy all-merciful bounty.”

Before all these great prelates, St. Basil taught the intercession of saints: “He who is oppressed by care, flies to their aid, as does he that prospers: the first, to seek deliverance; the second, that his good fortune may continue. The pious mother is found praying for her children: and the wife for the return and health of her husband. O ye guardians of the human race! O ye powerful messengers before God! Let us join our prayers with yours.”

¹ *Book On Widows.* ² *Crocus. Controv.* 7. ³ *St. Jerome, Ep.* XXVII. ⁴ *City of God,* B. XXI. ch. XXVII. ⁵ *Medit.* ch XL.

In the small number of isolated testimonies that you have just read, you have heard the most celebrated doctors of Italy, Africa, Syria, Egypt, Greece, and Asia. I shall now shew you all the bishops of the world united in the same sentiments, and you will at once become acquainted with the belief and practice of the universal Church. Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, who also presided over the council of Nice, preached the word before that venerable assembly on the feast of St. John. What then is he, I ask, who entered into the world? and in what manner was he introduced? Open to us this mystery, O evangelist! Tell us, blessed apostle, something grand and sublime: you who were called the son of thunder: you who by a transcendant doctrine have filled the whole world with admiration.....see this assembly, this multitude of pastors assembled for you. Remove for us the stone.....uncover the well of life, enable us to draw from it after your example, or rather conduct us, to your own spring."

And the whole council of Chalcedon, after hearing read the letter of Flavian, unanimously exclaimed; "That is the truth: we all say the same: may Flavian's memory be immortal....Flavian lives after his death. May the martyr pray for us!"

Permit me now to address those of the reformed religion who so bitterly condemn our invocation. Of all the Fathers whose particular testimonies I have adduced, there is not a single one, I will say to them, whose talents, virtues and apostolic labors you would not admire; not one whose sanctity, crowned in heaven, you would not unite with us in admitting. The most headstrong and impetuous of your ministers have never refused to number among the saints an Augustin, an Ambrose, a Jerome, a Chrysostom, a Gregory Nazianzum, a Gregory of Nyssa, a Basil, an Athanasius, &c. All these great men have invoked the saints, have exhorted the faithful of their time to pray to them, and to this day instruct us to pray to them. It is not true therefore that this practice is of so pernicious a character as you have been pleased to represent with no little acrimony and violence. Either expel from heaven all those illustrious doctors of the Church, or cease to calumniate their doctrine and conduct.

If they were idolaters, they could not be saints: if they are saints, they were not idolaters.

On a solemn occasion, in presence of two hundred bishops and a multitude of doctors assembled at Ephesus, the patriarch of Alexandria publicly invokes the assistance of the apostles; and not a single reclamation is heard. What is still more—at Chalcedon more than six hundred bishops cried out with one voice: “May the Martyr Flavian pray for us!” If you reason justly upon the invocation of saints, the whole council consisted of so many idolaters; not one of the six hundred bishops will be saved. But who would not reject with horror so monstrous an idea? Who could endure that these modern sophists should dare to raise their voice for the purpose of stigmatizing with idolatry their own judgès, the judges of doctrine, who were assembled in an œcumenical council, applauded by the universal Church and the uninterrupted adherence of so many centuries. The Fathers of Chalcedon, bordering upon the primitive times, and inheritors of tradition then recent, had formed their belief and practice upon the doctrine of the Church, on facts and writings which have not reached us. And fourteen centuries later, when the monuments, which they had, are not within your reach, you pretend to know more than they did respecting the first age of Christianity, and presume to treat their worship and doctrine as a novelty, a corruption, and idolatry! But whom will you persuade to believe this? Is there a single man of sense who will balance a moment between so ancient an authority and these upstarts, infected with the declamations of the sixteenth century? And after all, these declamations were not even then new: they were nothing more than the old rhapsodies, which, after causing some noise a little before the council of Chalcedon, were universally proscribed, and would have since remained in the same oblivious silence in which they were before, had not your reformers shewn less prudence than eagerness to stir them up again.

As for us resting upon all the monuments of antiquity, we confidently conclude from them that, in the fourth and fifth ages, all the Churches of the world were in the habit of invoking the

saints; that this universal practice, the origin of which cannot be fixed, must go back to the most distant times; that the primitive Church could not have observed it, without believing that the saints in heaven hear our prayers, that they intercede for us before God, and that it is profitable to invoke their intercession.

I add, that you are compelled to adopt these conclusions, if you wish not to be convicted, in the eyes of the world, of the most palpable inconsequences. In fact, you tell us, with your Reformers of a century or two back, that you attach yourselves exclusively to the belief and worship of the primitive Church, in laying aside what you accuse us of having added. Now she invoked the saints, as you cannot doubt; invoke them, therefore, with her. You, say again, with your pretended Reformers, that you glory in admitting the four first general councils: "These ancient synods of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and other such, assembled to combat errors, we willingly embrace," said Calvin;¹ "we venerate them as holy and sacred in every thing relating to the dogmas of faith." And this same Calvin calls the times, which include these four councils, the golden ages.² Believe, therefore, as Christians believed in those

¹ B. IV. de. Instit., ch. IX.

² The Lutherans sometimes boast of admitting the authority of these ancient councils, and of attaching themselves to the authority of the primitive Church. The solemn act of their profession of faith * runs thus: "We do not despise the consent of the Catholic Church, we wish not to support the seditious and impious opinions, which she has condemned; but it is the authority of the word of God and of the ancient Church, that has driven us to embrace this doctrine, for the greater glory of God, and the advantage of the well-disposed in the universal Church." And in the Apology, after the article of justification, it is said that "it was the doctrine of the prophets and the apostles of holy Fathers St. Ambrose and St. Augustin, of the greater part of the other Fathers, and of the whole Church, which considered Jesus Christ as a propitiator, and the author of justification; and that we must not take for the doctrine of the Roman Church all that is approved by the pope, some cardinals, bishops, theologians, or monks." Here is a distinction made between particular opinions and a dogma universally received, which they profess to leave unmolested.

There exists a letter against the modern Arians, written in the name of the pastors and professors of Geneva, to prince Nicholas Radzivil, Grand Mareschal of Lithuania. Beza, † who wrote the letter, expresses himself thus: "Well

* Confess. of Augsb. art. 21. † Opusc. Bez. page 246.

happy times; pray as they prayed in that golden age. Join, therefore, your voices to those of the Fathers of Chalcedon, and say with them: May the martyr Flavian pray for us! But to announce that you adhere solely to the worship and belief of the primitive Church, and at the same time to condemn, as a remnant of paganism, a part of her belief and worship; to boast of adhering to the four first general councils, and to represent as idolaters the six hundred bishops of Chalcedon; to call a golden age the period, in which you maintain that abomination was reigning in the temple, to transport to heaven and rank among the saints the very persons whom you mention as having been the first to give the people by their example and doctrine, lessons of idolatry; this evidently shews that you know not how to be consistent either with yourselves or with the primitive Church; it is at once admiring and opposing, admitting and rejecting. it is wandering and losing yourselves in a labyrinth of inconsequences. Heaven no doubt has permitted that the Reformers should fall into these striking contradictions, in order that those, who, in after times, should candidly examine their doctrine, might be able more easily to discover its erroneousness, and return with more eagerness and confidence to the ancient, and necessarily invariable doctrine of the Catholic Church.

But, in confining ourselves to our question, I propose yet farther to shew you the Reformation divided in itself, teaching by turns contradictory doctrines, the leaders and their disciples sometimes at war with each other, and more frequently among themselves; some defending our belief and practice from the then! let them prove to us clearly that dogma, which they discovered in Philipo Severus, Damian, and other monsters of fatal memory; and, if they can, let them demonstrate it either by reason, or by Scripture, or by the consent of the Fathers and of the ancient Church. For our part, we accept this condition, and if we do not make their blasphemies more manifest than the mid-day sun, we will then consent to it, illustrious prince, and you may consider us as false prophets."

And a little lower..... "What man of sense could they wish to persuade that Augustin ever taught respecting the Trinity otherwise than the African Churches, and these latter otherwise than the universal Church?" They who thus appeal to the authority of the Fathers and the ancient Church are evidently obliged, from their own principles, to admit its doctrine, and, to keep to our subject, to invoke the saints with Augustin, the African Churches, and all antiquity.

violent attacks made upon it by the others. Luther was bold enough to say in a low and frivolous style:¹ “As for me, I would not give a farthing for all the merits of Peter. Of what service would they be to me, since they have been of none to himself?” He says also² “Paul affects, it seems to me, from contempt to the mother of God, to call her but woman..... I cannot endure to hear it said to Mary: My hope and my life.” But the same Luther says elsewhere:³ “The saints can do all things, and through them God will grant you as much as you believe that you shall receive from them..... I have never denied⁴ that we were assisted by the merits and prayers of the saints..... as some miserable wretches have maliciously endeavored to impute to me.”

“By the fact alone of Mary becoming the mother of God, she has been loaded with admirable gifts, surpassing all comprehension. What makes her glory and her happiness, is that one single person of the human race is raised above all others, that she has no equal, and that she has for Son, Him who was already the Son of the heavenly Father.”⁵

Ecolampadius has written:⁶ “The veneration for Mary is nothing less than a worship of idols.” Who would believe that this same man has panegyrised Mary in the following lofty strains: “I would not wish the least part to be taken away from the worship of Mary..... God forbid that I should ever be heard to express any indifference to her, I, who regard it as a certain sign of reprobation, not to shew her the affection which is due to her. How should I not love her, whom God has loved, who has given a Saviour to the world, her whom the angels and the archangels *venerate*, who is become the *advocate* of the human race, and who is called the queen of mercies? O divine clemency! O the immense bounty of God, who has given so holy a mother to his Son, and to us a protectress so powerful in all things!”

Zuinglius wrote⁷ “I know that I have provoked against me

¹ In postilla majori, Dom. a Trinit. sept. ² On Ep. to Galat. ch. IV. ³ On the six precepts, ch. V. ⁴ Reply to the theol. of Louvain. ⁵ On the Nativ. of Mary. ⁶ Disc. on all the saints. ⁷ Art. 20.

the hatred of certain persons, because I attributed less than others to the intercession of the saints, and because I have ever been the first to reject it." Let the curate of Zurich hear the doctor of Wittenburg¹ and become instructed in his school: "On the intercession of the saints, I think with all the Christian Church, and I am of opinion that the saints are to be honored and invoked by us. Who could contradict the wonderful prodigies that God works, still in our days, at their tombs? I have said, I confess, that it was not worthy a Christian to ask their intercession for the interests of this world, rather than for those of heaven: they must therefore, be invoked in such a manner that the Lord may be invoked by them."

Melancthon, although in general less violent and oftentimes pacific, went so far as to say:² "The invocation of the dead, as it is practised in the invocation of the saints, is a manifest idolomania." The master is now going to correct the disciple.³ "It has never been my opinion," says Luther to him, "that the invocations made to the saints were blameworthy, even for temporal things, that savors of the heresy of our Bohemians." And again: "Let the sick man at the article of death, cease not to invoke the blessed Virgin, the angels, his apostle, and all the saints, that they would intercede for him before the Lord."

Calvin,⁴ enumerating the motives which obliged his followers to separate from the Catholics, puts in the first place the invocation of saints, adding that they could not unite with us in a religious assembly, without being defiled with our idolatry. But Calvin also had his slumbering moments: he forgot in his fourth book what he had written in the first, viz. that "during five hundred years religion had flourished in the purity of the true doctrine." The invocation at that time, therefore, had nothing idolatrous about it. And what is still more striking, in this very fourth book, he repeats that, "it is beyond all doubt and dispute that, from Jesus Christ to the times of the holy doctors (he here comprises St. Augustin) nothing had been changed in

¹ Correction of some articles by Luther. ² Opposition between the true and the pontifical doctrine. ³ Letter to Geo. Spalatin. ⁴ L. IV. De Inst. c. 21.

point of doctrine." Therefore, the invocation practised by these holy doctors, and since them by us, after their example, is traced back to the apostles themselves, according to the doctor of Geneva.

Calvin sometimes treats the saints with the utmost contempt, not blushing to call them shades, phantoms, manes, rotten carcases, &c. Sometimes in a style of low buffoonery, which he no doubt thinks good taste, he admires our simplicity in believing that the saints have ears long enough to reach us.

But Luther who was quite equal to him, could have taught him to speak more becomingly, and think more correctly upon this subject.¹ "Some one," says he, might ask here, of what use the saints will be to us. "Make the same use of them that you do of your neighbor. You say to him; Pray to God for me; say to them: St. Peter, pray for me. You do not sin by asking them to pray for you, neither do you sin by not asking them."

Theodore Beza, friend of the patriarch of Geneva, was no friend to the saints: according to him, "the invocation of departed saints is not only a vain and foolish practice; it is even absolutely impious." But at Bale, *Æcolampadius* did not hear this invocation treated so shamefully. "I would not deny," says he, "that the saints pray for us; neither would I assert that it is an impiety and an idolatry to implore their protection. The saints are enflamed with charity in heaven, they cease not to pray for us. What harm, therefore, is there in asking them to do that which we believe to be agreeable to God, although he has never commanded us to do so?..... It is what has been done by Chrysostom, and by Gregory of Nazianzum in his panegyric on St. Cyprian; and what has been practised by almost all the Churches of the East and the West."² Bucer and Camerarius speak with the same moderation and appear, if any thing, rather inclined towards the invocation.

The greater part of the reformed Calvinists put the invocation

¹Sermon on the feast of St. John the Baptist. ²Note on Hom. of St. John Chrysos.

of saints among the number of fundamental errors; but some of them, more tractable, will not have them to be such; amongst others Peter Martyr, Zanchius, and Molinæus.

The confession of Augsburg says: "The invocation of the saints who are dead is a practice that must absolutely be banished from the Church: and we are of opinion that it should be abolished." However, the patriarch of the Lutherans, as we have seen, has himself justified, approved, and even recommended this practice; Œcolampadius, Bucer and others have said almost as much in favor of it; and among the modern Lutherans we can cite one,¹ who has done great credit to the whole party by his learning and his virtues. "As for the invocation of saints" says he, "the danger that Protestants imagine they discover in it, will quickly vanish, provided that they of the Roman Church declare, that they pretend not to ask the saints, who are with God, to pray for them, in any other sense or with any other intention than they ask the saints who are upon the earth; and that in whatever terms this prayer is conceived, it is always understood in the way of intercession; that thus the words: Holy Mary, deliver me at the hour of death, signify. Holy Mary, intercede for me with your Son, that he would deliver me at the hour of death." Now this is a declaration that we have often made, and that we still make, and we repeat it after and with the council of Trent.

The Confession of faith of the Remonstrants or Arminians absolutely rejects the invocation of saints; if not as savoring of idolatry, at least as futile and vainly imagined. But Grotius, who for a long time supported the Arminians by his writings and his credit in Holland, and who, from his attachment to that party, lost his liberty at the time when his friend Barneveld lost his life for the same cause: Grotius, after having more deliberately examined the principles of the Reformation and those of the Church, not only abandoned the prejudices of the Arminians against the invocation, but himself defended and proved it by the same arguments that we draw from Scripture and Tradition,

¹ M. Molanus, Œuv. posth. de Bossuet, tom. I. p. 67.

and he concludes in these words: "After what I have just said, I imagine that every reader, not carried away by his prejudices, will see that it is much more reasonable to believe that the martyrs obtain some knowledge of our affairs, than to think that they obtain none."¹

In fine the confession of faith of the Anglican Church² puts the invocation of saints in the number of what it calls "fond things vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God."

There have, however, been able English theologians, who have thought it necessary to adopt other ideas about the invocation of saints, at a time when this question was better cleared up and understood than in the year 1552. I shall content myself with producing the testimony of one of your most distinguished prelates,³ who had made the question the subject of particular and deep investigation. "I do not deny, but the saints are mediators, as they are called, of prayer and intercession, but in general, and for all in general. They interpose with God by their supplications, and mediate by their prayers." And in a treatise⁴ expressly composed upon this subject, the doctor admits that the blessed in heaven do recommend to God, in their prayers, their kindred, friends, and acquaintance on earth. And having given his reason for this declaration: "This is the common voice with general concurrence, without contradiction of reverend and learned antiquity, for ought I could ever read, or understand; and I see no cause or reason to dissent from them, touching intercession in this kind..... Indeed, I grant, Christ is not wronged in his mediations;⁵ it is no impiety to say, as they (of the Roman Church) do; Holy Mary, pray for me: holy Peter pray for me..... Could I come at them,⁶ or certainly inform them of my state, without any question, or more ado, I would readily and willingly say, Holy Peter, blessed Paul, pray for me, recommend my case unto Jesus Christ our Lord. Were they with me, by

¹ Votum pro pace. ² Art. 22. ³ Dr. Montague, bishop of Chichester and Norwich, Antidote, p. 20. ⁴ Treat. Invoc. of Saints, p. 103. ⁵ Treat. Invoc. of Saints, p. 118. ⁶ Ibid. p. 119.

me, in my kenning, I would run with my open arms, and GON-UPETEIN, fall upon my knees, and with affection desire them to pray for me..... I see no absurdity in nature,¹ no incongruity unto analogy of faith, no repugnancy at all to sacred Scripture, much less impiety, for any man to say, holy angel guardian, pray for me." Behold here our invocation taught, with but a trifling difference, by the learned bishop of Norwich. He only hesitates at one point; he sees not how the saints hear us; if he were sure of being heard he would not hesitate a moment to invoke them. But we can have, in fact we have this certainty, without knowing the manner how our invocation reaches the saints. This knowledge is reserved for the other world. The possibility is all that we are given to understand in this. St. Augustin² felt the difficulty of Dr. Montague; but he was not, like him, discouraged by it. He did not conceive how the saints heard and assisted us, and yet he equally believed that they did both. The bishop of Norwich did not doubt, neither do Protestants in general doubt that the angels are informed of all that concerns us, and hear our prayers, although certainly they know not the manner how this is done. We have only, therefore, to raise the saints to an equality with the angels. Now we have the positive assurance that the saints are like unto them; and St. John describes them to us in heaven as sharing the functions, the joy, the triumphs, and the knowledge of the angels.

You have just seen the Protestants divided among themselves respecting the invocation of saints; some treating it as folly, impiety and idolatry; others finding in it nothing of the kind, but on the contrary approving of it, and going so far as to exhort the people to the practice of it. Supposing that it were necessary now to decide the question upon the simple authority of one or other of these two parties, which of the two should, in your opinion, carry the day? It is plain that they had, none of them, any desire to spare the Catholic Church, that they had rather a common interest in discovering its errors and defects, and exposing them in the most public manner. It is plain that they

¹Ibid. p. 97. ²Lib de Cur. pro Mort. C. XXVI.

could not have split upon the invocation of saints, and abandoned one another in favor of the Church, but from a personal conviction and the irresistible power of argument. It alone could make them surmount their repugnance to justify our belief, and their aversion to the article which their schismatical brethren gave out as the decisive reason of their separation. Nothing, therefore, but the solidity of proofs could have compelled them to renounce so important an advantage, and to give us the advantage over Protestants themselves. The others on the contrary, pushed on by a keener animosity, have discovered in us, or imagined for us, errors and defects which we have not. They have said: Our separation is not a schism, if Catholics are idolaters. By charging us with this crime, they exculpated themselves from the greatest crime we had to lay to their charge. Their anxiety to find us idolaters caused them to maintain that we were so, and that our means of defence did not clear us from the charge. Thus to form against us, and obstinately to maintain, this imputation of idolatry, they only had to yield themselves to the inclinations of their heart, and to consult the interests of their cause; whereas the former, in order to justify us, had their prejudices to subdue; and their unwillingness to be of service to their adversaries to overcome. The agreement of these latter with Catholics is, therefore, a decisive proof in favor of the invocation of saints, and the opposition of the other can be no argument against it.

To conclude, it is manifest that the invocation of saints supposes their intercession. For if they were indifferent about us, it would be quite useless to pray to them. Their intercession, considered in itself, does not necessarily suppose our invocation; but it invites and encourages us to invoke them. When once we know that, secure of their own salvation, the saints are tenderly solicitous for ours; that they are solicitous to see us sharing their happiness, and exert themselves to draw us to them by their prayers, it is but just to shew our gratitude for such good wishes and services; it is natural to wish and request them still to favor us with the succor of their prayers because we cannot

doubt that they are of more value than ours, and that we ought to feel more confident of obtaining the graces of the sovereign Master, when those graces are solicited for us by the saints reigning with him.

That the saints intercede for us before God, is a dogma of revelation, positively taught by the council of Trent, supposed in the second council of Nice, established on the Old and New Testaments, proved by the unanimous doctrine of the Fathers, and above all by the uniformity of the liturgies whether orthodox or schismatical of the fifth century. The greater part of Protestants, particularly the Lutherans, make no difficulty in admitting it.¹ But faith does not oblige us to believe that it is absolutely necessary to invoke the saints. The council of Trent does not teach that it is necessary, but simply that it is good and useful to invoke them. It does not impose upon us a general precept to invoke them; it confines itself to inculcate to us its utility. He who, acknowledging it in theory, should not take advantage of it in practice, would act unwisely for his own interest, but would not be a heretic.

This ancient and salutary custom of having recourse to the prayers of the blessed in heaven should greatly enlarge your ideas on the article of the creed, which you have often repeated, without ever perceiving its magnificence or extent; I mean the communion of saints. Hitherto, you have conceived this communion to be confined to our globe and its inhabitants, and again among its inhabitants to the small number of those, whose prayers you conceive may be of advantage to you. Form now more exalted ideas; leave the narrow limits of this world; the communion of saints knows no such confinement, it reaches to infinity, even to the throne of the Creator. It joins heaven to earth by the religious communication it keeps up between the inhabitants

¹ The Apology of the Confession of Augsburg says: "We grant that the saints pray in heaven for the Church in general." The Saxon Confession says: "There is no doubt that the saints pray for the Church: yet it does not follow that they are to be invoked." The Confession of Wittenberg says: "As the angels solicit for us, so likewise do the saints pray for the Church."—Chemnitius, Exam. of Council of Trent, p. 3.

of both, between those who live in glory and eternal beatitude, and us mortals who linger on through this obscure and transitory existence. It opens to your view the Heavenly Jerusalem, and represents the innumerable multitude of the angels and saints, and above them all, the first of creatures, the virgin Mary, mother of God, contemplating unveiled the objects of our faith, enjoying the objects of our hope, all united in charity, which inflames them with a love for God, and a mutual affection for each other, a love and affection that overflows in desires, wishes and supplications for our welfare. On the other hand, it shews you, in this world, weak and miserable sinners, confounded at their past transgressions, alarmed at the relapses that threaten them, mistrusting themselves and their acceptance with God, addressing themselves to his elect and friends, and requesting their support and assistance, by the union of their prayers and fraternal intercession.

LETTER XV.

Respect paid to Relics.

REPRESENT to yourself now, Sir, the claims that the apostles and those who have followed their steps, have acquired to our admiration, our gratitude and our love. They have dispelled far from us the mists of error and idolatry, brought back the people to the worship of the true God, softened the ferocity of nations, enlightened the mind by their instructions, touched the heart by their example, prepared succors and consolations for every kind of misery; confirmed some in the way of virtue, shewn to others the way of penance, to all the way to heaven: incessantly laboring for us, never for themselves, they terminated a life of privations, sufferings and indefatigable labors by the magnanimous sacrifice of life; and in heaven, in the full enjoyment of felicity, they continue to assist by their fervent intercession those whom they can no longer animate by their voice and example. Where shall we find benefactors equal to these? And yet, O shame, O base ingratitude! some persons who call themselves Christians blush not to rise up against the honor we pay to the memory of these heroes of Christianity. They impute it to us as a crime to preserve their spoils, to cherish their ashes, to adorn and visit their tombs; while they themselves are attached to the most insignificant object that recalls to their remembrance one whom they loved and who is no more: they raise sumptuous mausoleums, perhaps to illustrious malefactors of the human race, and they melt with sorrow at the sight of a Grecian or Roman female figure, holding an urn in her arms, and mingling her tears with the ashes of the object she adored! They make it a crime in us to embrace cold relics; but of whom are they the relics? Of those, the impressions of whose footsteps we ought to kiss if they were still among us. They treat us as senseless idolaters, because we place in our Churches the images of an apostle, of a martyr, or other holy personage, because we assemble together,

or even fall upon our knees in prayer, before the objects which recall to our mind so many virtues and benefits, and present to us at the same time guides and models in this world, and intercessors in the other; and they surround themselves with the images of those whom they call great men, and who but too frequently, together with shining qualities, have had the most shameful vices: and they pride themselves in having continually before their eyes the image of a friend and protector: take pleasure in its presence, in recalling to their minds the charms of his society, or the benefits they have received; and instead of an apostle, or a saint, they permit the portraits of a Melancton and a Luther to be honorably exposed in their temples, to the admiration of spectators!¹ What means this whimsicality of judgment? and how are we to account for the excessive rigor, with which they pronounce judgment against us? How should that, which in the social order is nothing but natural or innocent, or even laudable, become in the order of religion; senseless, criminal, and idolatrous? Listen a moment, Sir, and then be yourself the judge. On beholding the relics of the saints, on approaching their mortal remains, a religious respect suddenly steals upon us. The remembrance of the virtues they practised,

¹ I have seen these two portraits in the Lutheran Church at Wittemberg, and was informed that the likenesses were most correct. The one presents a pale, emaciated, and tranquil countenance, with a pleasant and modest look: the other, a middle-aged man, vigorous and of a full habit, his complexion ruddy, his eye ardent and daring, such as he appeared no doubt, when, trampling modesty under foot, he pronounced from the pulpit these words, which I transcribe with a blush: * "As it is not in my power not to be a man, so neither is it in my power to live without a woman, and that is more necessary for me than eating, drinking, and satisfying the necessities of the body"..... (His portrait shews sufficiently that he had not arrived at his age without indulging himself abundantly in eating and drinking: for the rest, how can we disbelieve what he declares respecting himself?) "If the women are obstinate," continues the new Evangelist, "it is proper that the husbands should say to them: If you are not willing, another woman will: if the mistress will not come, the maid servant will." Yet men have persuaded themselves that a preacher of this description was chosen by God to reform his Church! What an inconceivable extravagance! Shall we never recover from it? Shall it then cost man more, frankly to acknowledge his error, than to persist in it after it has been discovered?

* Sermon. preached at the commencement of his revolt from the Church.

and of the good they did upon earth, strikes forcibly upon our minds. A secret voice seems to break forth from their tombs, inviting us to admire and imitate them; these feet, does it say to us, walked constantly in the paths of justice; these hands were ever innocent and pure; this mouth opened not but to praise heaven, or bless men and lead them to virtue; these limbs lent their ministry to virtue and charity alone; or, if in the days of their wandering and weakness, they served the world and its follies, their stains were effaced by the abundant tears which flowed from these eyes, or by the blood that flowed from these veins. Victims of martyrdom and penance, an eternal weight of glory repays them for their momentary tribulations: and whilst Jesus Christ crowns their blessed souls in heaven, he honors also their mortal remains in the dust of the tomb. Here, not unfrequently have the prayers, animated by the sight of their relics, been heard and granted; here the lame have been cured, the blind restored to sight, and the sick to health. Not, however, that we are to imagine in these bones or ashes any inherent power, any supernatural and divine efficacy; the very bones and ashes themselves admonish us that the saints were but mortals like ourselves. But we believe and know that God has sometimes been pleased to honor them, and signally shew his love for his servants, by the wonders he has wrought at their tombs. Who has not heard of a dead person being raised to life by merely touching the bones of the prophet Eliseus,¹ of the sick being cured by the mere shadow of St. Peter,² and by the simple application of the handkerchiefs and aprons which had only touched the body of St. Paul?³ Who doubts the miraculous facts which the primitive Church so often witnessed at the tombs of the martyrs? Wherefore, when we call to mind these extraordinary graces, or when we ourselves petition for the like in the places where they have occurred, we do not address our thanksgiving and prayer to the relics lying before us, how holy and venerable soever they may be; but it is God whom we bless for having honored them; it is from God that we implore through

¹ IV Kings, xiii. 21. ² Acts, iv. 15. ³ Acts, xix. 12.

them the same mercies; from God, in fine, that we petition for grace, in union with such or such a saint, whose remains are dear to us, and whose memory is precious in his sight. It is from God therefore, as from its source, that we derive the respect we pay to relics; and to God, as to its last end, that it is referred—in him it terminates.

These are our sentiments; we have never had any other. They, who believe that we think otherwise, are deceived. There is much said about erroneous and superstitious notions frequently entertained by people on the subject of relics: I shall not dispute their existence; and perhaps they were more generally spread at the time of the Reformation than at any other period. Would to God they had then confined themselves to an attack upon those erroneous notions, and had succeeded in eradicating them! But it would be most unreasonable to impute them to the Church, who condemns them, and never ceased to combat them, and to oppose to them the inculcation of sound doctrine. This sound doctrine I have just laid before you; tell me, Sir, have you discovered any thing irrational or criminal in it! Have you discovered, in the respect and veneration we pay to sacred relics, so much as a shadow of idolatry?

Let Luther indulge, as may suit his fancy, in phillippics against relics; let him treat them as frauds and seductions that should be buried deeply under ground; let him declare, in his brutish language, that he cares no more for the bones of a saint than for those of a hanged malefactor:¹ let Calvin treat our veneration as superstitious, and the certain source of idolatry; let him teach and preach that the bodies of the saints should have been left at peace in their tombs, and not brought out to be deposited in more sumptuous and honorable monuments; let his

¹ Tom. VIII. ed. germ. of Jen. 277.—No doubt, these expressions escaped him in a moment of vexation or drunkenness. For in more sober moments he acknowledges “that God still performed miracles by his saints, at their tombs, in presence of their relics: miracles performed before the eyes of the world.” Tom. I. ed. germ. of Jen. And in another place he says: “Where the true relics of the saints are found, there without doubt has been and still is the true Church of Christ; there have the saints dwelt.”—*Treatise on private mass.*

disciples and followers spread abroad his maxims, and induce the people, by intemperate harangues, to declare an eternal war upon relics, let them, with sacrilegious hand, violate the tombs of the saints, let them scatter abroad their relics, trample them under foot, cast them into the stream, or make bonfires of them with ferocious insolence; let our revolutionists, coming from the same school and agitated with the same phrenzy, renew, in the eighteenth century, the scenes of atrocity which their predecessors and masters of the sixteenth had given the example of to unfortunate France.

For our parts, let us be permitted to lament and pity so much blindness and madness: our principles and practice come from a very different school: we are proud to derive them from the pure and primitive Church. We have learned piously to preserve and honor the relics of saints, from the affectionate care taken by the apostles of the relics of him who first gave his blood for Christ, and who first caused the tears of the Church to flow;¹ from the religious fervor of the Christians in collecting the bodies of SS. Peter and Paul immediately after their martyrdom, to transfer them to a distinguished place in the catacombs, and thence to translate them to the first of the Basilicks, which has beheld every thing that is great in the world humbly and respectfully fall prostrate before their tombs; from the affecting zeal of the faithful of Antioch in requiring Rome to restore the remains of their illustrious bishop and martyr Ignatius;² from that of the indefatigable Christians who from Rome to Antioch, from town to town, transported them in triumph on their shoulders, resounding on their way the praises of God, and the glory of his crowned champion; from the admirable letter³ which the Christians affectionately read upon the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, and which without doubt would have given other notions to the Reformers, if these had weighed the following words: "Our subtle enemy the devil, did his utmost that we should not take away the body, as many of us anxiously wished. It was sug-

¹ Acts, viii. 1. ² St. Chrysos. Disc. on Ign. ³ The Church of Smyrna to that of Pontus, in Euseb. His. Eccl. B. IV. c. 15.

gested, that we should desert our crucified master, and begin to worship Polycarp. Foolish men! who knew not that we never can desert Christ, who died for the salvation of all men; nor worship any other. Him we adore as the Son of God; but we shew deserved respect to the martyrs, and his disciples and followers. The centurion, therefore, caused the body to be burnt. We then gathered his bones, more precious than pearls and more tried than gold, and buried them. In this place, God willing, we will meet, and celebrate with joy and gladness the birthday of his martyr, as well in memory of those who have been crowned before, as, by his example, to prepare and strengthen others for the combat."

We have learned that in the honors rendered to martyrs, the Churches of Africa rivalled those of Asia in the second century, as Tertullian testifies;¹ "On the days consecrated to the martyrs, we sacrifice in memory of their death;" in the third, according to the injunction of St. Cyprian,² who exhorts "to be exact in the precise inscription of the day of the death of the martyrs, that they may be able to celebrate it by gifts and sacrifices."

We have learned that this respect, judging of it by the principles of reason alone, has been found conformable with the practice of antiquity. Plato³ thought that the brave, who died courageously in battle, should be venerated as heroes, and their tombs renowned. Eusebius⁴ relates this sentiment, and adds; "How well does this apply to those friends of God, who are just called the soldiers of genuine piety! For it is our practice to honor their sepulchres, there to utter our prayers and our vows and to venerate their blessed souls; and this we say is justly done." St. Chrysostom⁵ has gone so far as to refer it to our Saviour; Christ caused himself to be adored by the world after his death. And why do I speak of Christ? He has desired that his disciples should, after their death, become illustrious. Why again do I say his disciples? He has taken care that the places,

¹ De Coron. Milit. 3. ² Epist. XXXVII. ³ L. IV. De Repub. ⁴ Prepar. Evang. L. XIII. c. XI. ⁵ Hom. LXVI.

the days of their death, and their tombs should be celebrated by an eternal memorial."

We have learned also that God has often manifested, by his miracles, how agreeable this respect was to him. Of this we are furnished with numerous testimonies by antiquity: we will confine ourselves to a few. St. Cyril of Jerusalem supposes the miraculous facts performed by means of the relics, when to render them credible to his catechumens, he said to them: "From the fact of a dead man being restored to life by touching the body of Eliseus, we learn that, when the soul is departed, a certain virtue remains in the bodies of saints; and that, on account of the merit of the souls that resided in them. Of this we cannot doubt. For if the handkerchiefs and aprons, mere external appendages, (of which we read Acts c. 19) cured the sick that touched them; more efficacious, we may conclude, would be the body of the prophet." St. Gregory of Nazianzum,² speaking of miraculous cures, said: "The mere dust of Cyprian, if approached with faith, is able to effect them. Those know it, who have made the experiment: those also who have seen it, who have related it, and who will transmit the remembrance of it to posterity." St. Cyril, in his first discourse against Julian, apostrophizes him in these words: "How is it thou payest no respect to those, who are honored with festivals, and by whom devils have been expelled, and infirmities cured?" &c. St. Ambrose relates the miraculous cure of the blind man, performed before the people of Milan, on the day of the translation of SS. Gervase and Portase, whose bodies had been discovered the day before. St. Augustin, then at Milan, had witnessed the fact, and often himself related it afterwards. But the Arians contesting the miracle, St. Ambrose ascended the pulpit the following day, and said: "They deny that the blind man was restored to his sight: but he himself does not deny that he has been cured. He says: I, who could not see at all before, can now see. He says; I am no longer blind, and he proves it by the fact. These people, being unable to contradict the fact, reject

¹ Catech. XVIII. on Resurr. ² Serm. on St. Cyprian.

the miraculous grace. The man is known in all this town..... His name is Severus, by profession a butcher..... He protests that having touched the linen, that covered the sacred relics, his sight was immediately restored to him.”¹

We have learned again that the relics of the saints were placed with honor on the ancient altars, as they are upon ours. “But if the relics of saints deserve no veneration, the bishop of Rome is greatly to be blamed, who, over the bones of Peter and Paul, venerable in our estimation, vile and contemptible in yours, offers sacrifice to the Lord, and regards their tombs as the altars of Christ?”² St. Ambrose³ says: “Receive therefore as pledges of salvation the bodies of the holy martyrs (Vitalis and Agricola) deposited under these sacred altars.” And elsewhere:⁴ “Let these triumphant victims be lodged in the place where Jesus Christ is our Host: upon the altar, Him who has suffered for all; under the altar, them who have been redeemed by his death. I had intended this place for myself: for it is just that the priest should repose where the priest has so frequently offered sacrifice. But I yield my right to these sacred victims: it is due to martyrs.”—“I recommend to your charity,” says St. Augustin, “this place and this feast: let us celebrate both in honor of the God whom Stephen confessed. For here we have not raised an altar to Stephen, but from the relics of Stephen an altar to God.” According to this great bishop, the bodies of the martyrs appeared to St. John under the altar in heaven; because their bodies were deposited under altars here below. He believed, therefore, that this ancient practice of the Church went back to the apostolic times.

We have learned in fine that the faithful of the first ages eagerly resorted to the tombs of the martyrs, that they divided their relics, and respectfully kissed them. You shall now see comprised, in a single passage, almost the whole system of our respect to the saints.

¹ We find many miracles of this kind attested by St. Chrysostom, St. Isidore of Damietta, by Palladius, SS. Jerome, Augustin, &c. ² St. Jer. *against Vigil* c. II. ³ Exhort. to Religious Virgins. ⁴ Epist. LXXXV. on SS. Gerv. and Prof.

St. Gregory of Nyssa, after saying that the body of Theodore had been honorably deposited and placed with great respect in the holy place; after describing the magnificence of the Basilick, constructed at a great expense, with admirable art, ornamented interiorly by master-pieces of painting, which represented our Saviour, and his martyr throughout the successive variety of torment he had endured, the Christian orator adds:¹ “From the admiration produced by the sight of so many wonders, we pass eagerly to the tomb; we approach it with the hope that by touching it we may receive some benediction. He who obtains, as a favor, permission to carry away some little dust of the sepulchre, receives and preserves it as a treasure of great value. But if fortunately he be allowed to touch the relics themselves, he has attained the height of his wishes. Those know it well, who have been admitted to this favor, and whose desires were accomplished. The body of the martyr appears to them in a state of freshness, as if it was still breathing; they kiss it and successively apply to it their eyes, mouth, ears, and all their senses.”

“He, who rules the earth and seas, eagerly resorts to the tomb of the Fisherman; to enjoy the consolation of kissing his relics.”² St. Augustin³ has expressed the same sentiment, which St. Chrysostom had uttered before both of them, “You see the illustrious chief of the greatest of empires appear as a suppliant at the tomb of the Fisherman, and the head that bears the diadem humbly bowing before the remains of Peter.” “For our part, we say not that the martyrs were gods: but it is our custom to render honor to their tombs, and veneration to their relics.”⁴ “It is they,” says St. Basil,⁵ “who, having taken possession of our country, stand as towers against the incursions of the enemy. They are not confined to one place, but, dispersed about, they are become the guests and the citizens of many countries, which they adorn with their presence.” Hear now what St. Chrysostom said to his people:⁶ “For myself, I admire Rome, and celebrate

¹ Disc. on the Mart. Theod. ² St. Isid. of Dam. B. II. p. 5. ³ Epist. XLII.

⁴ St. Cyril against Julian, B. VI. ⁵ Disc. on the Forty Martyrs. ⁶ Hom. XXXII. on Epist. to Rom.

it, not for the splendor and abundance of its gold, not for the magnificent edifices, but for those two columns of the Church which it possesses. O who will give me to embrace the body of Paul.....to cling to his sepulchre, to contemplate even the dust of his body!.....the dust, I say, of that mouth by which Jesus Christ has spoken to us, and from which came forth a light more resplendent than the sun..... Yes, I could wish to see the tomb, which encloses those weapons of justice and truth, those members still living..... This body, with that of Peter, shall always be for Rome a more secure defence than walls and towers.”

“If any one should say to me: ‘What is it you honor in a body already consumed by dissolution?’ Let your doctors now pay attention to the answer given to this question by the great archbishop of Milan. “I honor, in the body of a martyr, the scars received for the name of Christ. I honor the memory of him, who lives eternally by his virtue. I honor the ashes become sacred by confessing the Lord, I honor in these ashes the seeds of immortality; I honor a body which teaches me to love God, and not to be afraid of dying for him: and why should not the faithful hold in estimation and honor a body that casts terror and dismay among the devils!..... I honor a body which, under the sword, has honored Christ, and which is one day to reign with him in heaven.”

There is nothing, even to the wax candles we light, and the incense we burn, before the relics, the example and practice of which we do not find in the Christian antiquity. To prove this, it would suffice to produce the reproach which Vigilantius² thought fit to cast upon the whole Church in this particular. Among the presents that Constantine made to the relics of Peter, Paul, Laurence and of the true cross, were candlesticks, lamps and what was to be burnt continually in the Roman basilick. When this great Emperor terminated his days at Constantinople, his body was carried into a large apartment of the imperial palace, elevated upon a catafalque covered and surrounded with gilded candlesticks, and so thickly lighted up as to present a most bril-

¹ St. Ambrose Serm. XCIII. ² Life of Sylvest. *Collec. of Councils*, Tom. I.

liant and magnificent appearance; never, as Eusebius reports, never since the creation, was so grand a spectacle exhibited to the world. Theodoret relates that, at the translation of St. Chrysostom, his relics were preceded by a great number of lights.¹

Fire is an emblem of life:¹ It is also a sign of glory, and was formerly borne before Emperors and Empresses. Under both these relations, about whom can it be more appropriately employed than about the saints, whose souls already reign in the glory of heaven, and whose bodies are destined to a life eternal. The pagans, it is true, have employed fire, incense and lights before their idols. But, because these blinded creatures have miserably abused them, shall it be unlawful for us to employ them to a better purpose? “That was done for the idols,” said St. Jerome, “and then it was to be abhorred: it is now done for the martyrs, and on that account, it is to be approved.”² You have just heard the sentiments of some of the most illustrious Fathers of the first ages: they have made you acquainted with what was observed in their time. I leave you to compare with their practice and doctrine, the discourse and the conduct of those who gave themselves out for reformers and reformed: judge now yourself whether these latter are not evidently convicted by the primitive Church of sacrilege toward sacred relics.

¹ Here are some verses, which are not without merit for poetical description, and which may perhaps be read by the lover of antiquity with some interest. They are from St. Paulinus: he is describing the manner in which the Church and the altars were ornamented for the feast of St. Felix.

Aurea nunc niveis orbantur limina velis :
 Clara coronantur densis altaria lychnis,
 Limina ceratis adoleſcunt odora papyris.
 Nocte, dieque micant : sic nox splendorque dici
 Fulget, et ipsa dies cœlesti illustris honore
 Plus micat, innumeris lucem geminata lucernis

² Herodian, B. I. ³ Cont. Vigilan.

LETTER XVI.

Images.

WHO would have imagined that the sixteenth century was destined to witness a renewal of the disputes and outrages concerning images, which had so cruelly agitated the eighth? On the first appearance of the Iconoclasts, supported by Leo the Isaurian, the most learned men of the day, headed by German, the patriarch of Constantinople, justified the Church on the ridiculous and calumnious notions attributed to her worship. The second council of Nice, convoked by the empress Irene and pope Adrian, discussed the question most maturely, and defined:¹ “That pictures and images are set up in Churches and other places that at the sight of them the faithful may remember what they represent: and that the honor paid to images passes to the archetypes or things represented, so that, he, who reveres the image, reveres the person it represents.” It approves consequently of the expression of Leontius, bishop of Napoli in the Island of Cyprus: “When you see Christians adore the cross, know that they pay their adoration to Jesus Christ crucified, and not to the wood” And as the word *adoration* is a general expression, applying to God, the angels, the person of the emperors and their statues, to animate and even to inanimate things, as well informed persons of all parties admit, the council distinguishes the adoration due to God alone from that which may be rendered to other objects: it calls the first *adoration of latria*, and confines it to God alone: the latter, which is paid to images, it calls *salutation, a relative and inferior honor*, which passes to the original; but is ever distinct from the worship of *latria*, which exclusively belongs to the divine nature.

These decisions had been applauded in the East, and confirmed in Italy: the Churches of France and Germany, at first deceived by an unfaithful version, supposed that the fathers of Nice were allowing to images adoration properly so called, and unanimously

¹ Act VI.

and very justly condemned such an opinion: but no sooner did they discover their mistake than they acknowledged with joy that the doctrine really propounded by the council of Nice was the doctrine of antiquity. The seventh council therefore had at last received the consent of the universal Church; all were unanimous, all in peace: images received in public worship the veneration due to them: three centuries passed in this wise and peaceable uniformity. Peter de Bruys, and, after him, the Vaudois, and the Albigenses begin to create disunion in France; later still, Carlostadius renews their excesses in Wittemberg: Luther hastens thither to restore order, reproves his rash disciple, writes against the iconomachs, and reproaches them for a spirit, which, he said, would never breathe any thing but fury, blood and slaughter. But the Zuinglians and Calvinists quickly renew the war against images, and fill the world with their clamors and invectives, which are still re-echoed in our days. What fresh discovery had they made? Did any new reasons present themselves, which had escaped the Iconoclasts of the eighth century? Nothing of the kind. But perhaps the Catholic Church had latterly transgressed the prescribed bounds, in her doctrine and practice? Very far from it. Once defined, her principles are irrevocable: she herself is immutably chained by bonds, which at no future period can she ever rend asunder. Again then, what means this aggression of the reformed, what is their object in reproducing calumnies refuted and crushed so many ages before? They were anxious to find some crimes in the Church, from whom they had just separated. Cost what it will, she must be proved idolatrous. Although she can soundly and triumphantly clear herself of the charge, it matters not: by dint of repetition we shall drive it into our followers, and stagger hers; many of her own children will be panic-struck and take to flight: their defection will increase our party, and the work of separation, professing a horror of idolatry, will be perpetuated to the end of time.¹

¹ This imputation of idolatry succeeded in gaining credit in England, although with difficulty. "The queen," says Burnet "seemed to think the use of images

Unfortunately for the execution of this noble and charitable enterprise,¹ there was nothing new to give to the people. They were compelled to bring forward the superannuated objections of the Iconoclasts, the principal of which was drawn from the first or second commandment, according as the Decalogue happens to be divided, which is not of any essential importance. Since that time, they have laid much stress upon the dangers, as regards the people, of passing from the relative worship that we defend, to the absolute worship that we all condemn, upon the novelty of this relative worship in the Church, and upon the opposition they pretend to say that it found at its commencement in the opinion of some of the Fathers. You will, I flatter myself, soon see that these objections are far from being solid. Observe, moreover, that even were the two latter well founded, they would by no means establish the fact of idolatry, neither would they afford any just ground for the schism; for, evidently, the danger of becoming idolatrous does not prove a man to be so, and the novelty of a relative worship; supposing it to be admitted for a moment, could prove nothing more than that such worship is not necessary; and this we all allow.

The ancient Iconoclasts had discovered in the precept of the

in Churches might be a means to stir up devotion, and that at least it would draw all people to frequent them the more.”* But not being able to resist the party which had now quite prevailed, the supreme governess was compelled to act contrary to her ideas and wishes; for, says Burnet again,† “The queen put it into her injunctions to have all images removed out of the Church.”

² If I am accused of being deficient in charity, by supposing in the Calvinistic reformers so odious and criminal an intention, I ask, whether it be possible for ecclesiastics, instructed, as they were, in the bosom of the Church, not to know that idolatry was not taught in the Church they had forsaken; not to know that they had not been trained by their superiors to render an idolatrous worship to images, and that they themselves had never paid such worship, either in the Churches which they had governed, or in the monasteries to which they had belonged. What then originated this accusation of theirs against the Church? I say it with sorrow, for it must be said; it must have sprung from that hatred which envenoms all that it touches, and which, to destroy an enemy changes the most innocent and laudable actions into crimes.

* Burnet's Hist. of the reformat. Part 2, Book 3. p. 397. London, 1681, Fol.—† Ibid. p. 398.

Decalogue two prohibitions absolutely distinct; the one, prohibiting the making of "any graven thing, or the likeness of any thing that is in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth;" the other, prohibiting us to "adore or serve them;" or as the Protestant Scripture has it, "to bow down to them or worship them." By taking the two parts, which they made thus distinct, strictly according to the latter, they found that the divine commandment as strictly forbade the making of them as the bowing down to them; they felt that if they once softened down the prohibition to make them, they would be obliged equally to soften down the prohibition to honor them: being resolved to make no mitigation in the second, they carried the first to an outrageous extravagance, and unhesitatingly pronounced anathema, not only on those who adored images, but on those also who presumed to make them, or place them either in the Churches or in private houses. Proceeding thus from consequence to consequence, they at last went so far as to pronounce that painting is an abominable and impious art, an art forbidden by heaven, an invention of a diabolical spirit, that ought to be exterminated from the Church." Such is the decree of their famed conventicle at Constantinople,¹ so boasted of by the reformed, who have even thought proper to call it the eighth œcumenical council, although they must have known perfectly well, that the œcumenicity of a council depends upon its general acceptance, and that this conventicle of theirs excited nothing but a universal indignation; that even those of the bishops, who lived thirty years after its celebration, solemnly retracted in the second council of Nice,² and confessed that they had yielded through weakness to the violent threats of Constantine Copronymus.

That there should have been found three hundred and sixty-six bishops sufficiently servile to adopt against painting and sculpture, the notions which the brutal and savage Copronymus had borrowed from barbarian Mahometans and some fanatical Jews; sufficiently depraved to define, contrary to their conscience, that all making of images and statues is forbidden by the law of God;

¹ An. 754. ² An. 787.

to attribute to the devil two arts the sole object of which is to imitate the work of the Creator, and the merit of which procures honor to the artist and exquisite delight to the man of taste, is base and corrupt and shameful to a degree. For the question had been learnedly discussed under the preceding reign of the Isaurian; it had been explained in the most luminous manner by two men of superior minds and intrepid souls, German, patriarch of Constantinople, and John Damascen, whose writings we still admire. It was therefore well understood, under the reign of Copronymous, that the Decalogue does not forbid sculpture and painting, since we read¹ that God commanded Moses to make the ark of the testimony and to place on each side the statue of a cherub; since we read² that he commanded him to make a brazen serpent and set it up, which, when they that were bitten by the serpents, look upon, they were to be healed; since we read again³ that God “called Beseleel, and filled him with wisdom and understanding, and knowledge in all manner of work, to devise whatsoever may be artificially made of gold, and silver, and brass, of marble and precious stones, and variety of wood.” All this had been brought forward and often repeated; and I doubt whether there was a single bishop in the conventicle of 754, who was not perfectly instructed in the subject. Thus, I cannot discover any other motive for their unworthy conduct, than that which was afterwards avowed by many of them—the fear of exposing themselves to the rage of a furious and ungovernable tyrant.⁴

It must be said, to the praise of the Iconoclasts of the sixteenth century, that they almost all abandoned their ancestors of the eighth, as far as related to these extravagant notions. They

¹ Exodus, xxv. ² Num. xxi. ³ Exodus xxxi. ⁴ Six Iconoclast emperors have, in times past, troubled the Church and the world during one hundred and thirty years. At an earlier period, Constantius and Valens had excited a tremendous commotion in the business of the Arians. Since that time, Michael and Bardas separated the Greek and Latin Churches, supported the pretensions of Photius, renewed three centuries afterwards by the monk Cerularius, and consolidated with the assistance of the imperial authority by a schism which continues to this day.

do not explain the command in a sense so totally opposite to most numerous passages of Scripture. They esteem and encourage the talents of the painter and the sculptor: they highly prize the master-pieces of the first artists, collect them at a great expense, and preserve them with peculiar care. So far we are agreed. But in general they make it a crime in us to place in our Churches the paintings which they place in their galleries and apartments. The same crime they must equally impute to the Greek and even Lutheran Churches. Let them visit England, and there they will very frequently see Moses and Elias represented with the tables of the law; let them enter Windsor Castle, and they will there find a beautiful representation of the last supper; let them go to Cambridge to be delighted with the royal chapel of the most delicate gothic structure, and there they will be struck with admiration on beholding a beautiful painting of the Italian school. During the whole of Elizabeth's reign, was to be seen in the oratory of her place, as Thuanus relates, a crucifix: which she could never be prevailed upon to part with. I doubt not that these facts are known by the greater part of Calvinistic writers; but they pass them by unnoticed; it is in us that such things are objectionable; in us every thing annoys them, even what they willingly concede to others, provided that in any one single point they make common cause with them against us. Their severity is entirely for Catholics; their indulgence for any one who is not a Catholic.

Yet they do not agree in their charges against us. Some are positive that we are downright idolaters, because we contemplate with respect and affection the images exposed in our Churches, because we go down upon our knees, in prayer, because we light tapers and burn incense before them. But, let me ask, where the Israelites idolaters when they turned their eyes devoutly towards the sanctuary in which were deposited the ark and the cherubim? or when, in the posture of suppliants, they cast an eye of confidence and hope upon the brazen serpent? Were Josue and all the ancients of Israel, idolaters, because they religiously fell prostrate on the ground before the ark of the testa-

ment? Was David an idolater, when he brought back the ark of God with all the pomp and solemnity mentioned in the Scripture? And, to refer to your own customs, are the peers of your realm idolaters, because, when passing the throne, they always turn towards it and respectfully bow to it? Are all Englishmen idolaters, because, at divine service, they religiously bow their heads to the name of Jesus? Or is it more idolatrous to bow before an image that strikes our eyes, than at the sound of the name of Jesus that strikes our ears?

What, I ask again, has idolatry to do with the tapers we burn, not only, on occasions, before an image, but always before the altar during divine service, and which we multiply as a sign of joy, on great solemnities? What has idolatry to do with the incense we give, not only to images, but also, according to very ancient custom, to the altar, the officiating minister, the book of the Gospels, all the clergy, the temporal lords, the people, and even the dead? Eusebius¹ relates a miracle wrought by the holy bishop of Narcissus in 250, which at once both proves and justifies the custom of lighting lamps in the Church of Jerusalem. He teaches also² that on the eve of the Pasch, besides the illuminations of the Churches, Constantine ordered large wax tapers and all sorts of lamps to be lighted and burnt in the streets of the capital, so that the night was bright as day. "In all the Churches of the East," says St. Jerome,³ "they light tapers in open day, when the Gospel is read; evidently not to give greater light, but as a sign of joy, and as a symbol of the divine light, of which it is written in the Psalms: Thy word is the light, enlightening my paths." St. Isidore of Seville⁴ testifies to the same custom, and attributes it to the same motive: "As a sign of joy," says he, "that this material light may represent the light of which it is written in the Gospel. He was the true light." Since the fourth age, the bodies of the faithful departed have been carried into the Church with a great number of lighted tapers. The emperor Constantine, St. Paul, St. Simeon Sty-

¹ Hist. Eccles. L. VI. C. VII. ² Life of Constantine, B. IV. ³ Epist. against Vigil. ⁴ B. VII. on the *Orig.*

lites, and very many others, the account of whose funeral obsequies have been committed to writing, were carried in this manner, and to this day the custom prevails among us. We know also from the testimonies of St. Paulinus, and of Prudentius, that, in the same age, tapers were burnt at the tombs of the martyrs, day and night.

As for incense, it appears that it was not used in the Churches during the three first ages, "Truly" said Tertullian,¹ "we do not purchase incense. If the merchants of Arabia complain, the Sabæans will know that we employ more of their aromatic spices, and with more profusion in the burial of Christians, than you consume in incensing your gods." Incense was at that time prostituted to idols. The Christians no doubt waited till they were no longer surrounded by these detestable perfumes, to offer an agreeable incense to God, for from the fourth century we find it employed in our temples. The liturgies point out the incensings about the altar, and the accompanying prayers. The Apostolical canons, attributed to St. Dionysius, the Areopagite, speak of it. "Do not bury me with aromatic spices," said St. Ephrem in his Testament; "offer them to God; but accompany me with your prayers."—"Would to God," says St. Ambrose,² "that an angel were present, or rather should become visible, "when we incense the altars." And to cite also one of your venerable countrymen;³ "Let the incense smoke on the Feasts of the saints," said he, "because like lilies, they have spread upon earth an odoriferous perfume." And indeed, Sir, is it possible to choose a more natural and happy emblem of our prayers than incense, which by the activity of the fire, mounts into the air, like as our prayers, animated by the fire of divine love, mount up to heaven? Accordingly it is the emblem, under which the Holy Spirit is pleased to represent to us the prayers, which the angels offer to God for us.⁴ Is it not then truly deplorable that a few discontented, turbulent, and tasteless individuals should in these latter ages have determined upon reforming Antiquity, and

¹ Apol. C. XLII. ² Comm. on St. Luke, B. I. c. I. v. II. ³ Theod. Archbishop. of Canter. 7th cent. On Penance, c. I. ⁴ Apocalypse.

should have taken upon themselves to calumniate the most venerable customs, and to inspire a horror of them, by representing them as idolatrous?

Others, less violent, are satisfied with maintaining that the honor paid to Jesus Christ, to his blessed mother and to the saints, in the presence of their images are a violation of the divine precept. "Let them believe or not, say they, that there is a hidden virtue in the image; whether they confine to the image their thoughts and worship, or whether they pass on further, and raise their mind to the original; if they humble and prostrate themselves before the image, it is a violation of the law of God, it is going against the words of the legislator, it is awakening his jealousy, and provoking his vengeance." Such I know to be the precise expressions of one from among them. But the assertion cannot be supported; the precept forbids no such thing. Do they seriously imagine that the most celebrated Fathers, the noblest geniuses of Christian antiquity, and the universal Church did not understand before them this precept of the Decalogue? Do they indeed expect to persuade us that it was reserved for the preachers of the sixteenth century, to give the key to the true understanding of it to the world? Is there a man of sense, who does not immediately reject so ridiculous a pretension? And yet, we do not refuse to examine it, in order that we may not be accused of a want of complaisance and regard towards our separated brethren.

I observed a little above that, by general consent, the Israelites were not idolaters, when they prayed upon their knees before the brazen serpent; that David, Josue, the Ancients, and all the people were not idolaters, when they sung or fell prostrate on their face before the Ark and the Cherubim. Much less will it be said that they were prevaricators of the divine law upon these different occasions. It is not true, therefore, that the signs of joy, veneration, and humility, such as the genuflexion or even a complete prostration before all kinds of images, are so many prevarications against the Decalogue. But what are the images before which these signs merit the name of crime and

idolatry? And what is the true signification of the first Commandment? The Scripture alone will answer these questions. God said: "Thou shalt not have strange Gods before me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing." Here those images are meant, which are taken for other gods, and which are raised in opposition to the only true God. "Thou shalt not make to thyself the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth." Who does not clearly see that this division refers to the sun and the stars, which the Chananeans adored; to the oxen and animals, which Egypt adored; and to the serpents and fishes which the Philistines and Egyptians adored? Marking, therefore, these three kinds of idols which surrounded the Israelites, the Lord proceeds: "Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them: I am the Lord thy God mighty, jealous, &c." The images proscribed and before which it is forbidden to fall prostrate, are those, therefore, which were served and adored; the images to which the neighboring nations prostituted the worship exclusively belonging to God; the images which, raised in his place and before his face, excited his jealousy and indignation; and not the images which like the ark, the cherubim, the brazen serpent, &c. received neither service nor adoration. Whence it follows that no other reasonable interpretation can be given to the commandment but this. Thou shalt not make a graven thing, or the likeness of any thing, for the purpose of adoring and serving it.

If you require a still more decisive proof of this, the Scripture gives it in express terms in the Book of Leviticus,¹ where the same order is repeated in these words: "I am the Lord your God: you shall not make to yourself any idol or graven thing, neither shall you erect pillars, nor set up a remarkable stone in your land to adore it." By comparing these two passages, we clearly discover that the precept is the same against images; the sense therefore is also the same: evidently the allusion in Levit-

¹ Lev. xxvi.

icus is to images made to be adored ; therefore the allusion is the same in Exodus.

In Leviticus, this precept forbids, besides images, pillars and remarkable stones. It forbids equally and at once the making of them, in order to adore them : therefore it does not forbid them, if they are not made in order to be adored. And in fact did not Josue² raise twelve large stones in memory of the miraculous passage over the Jordan ? Did he not again raise one, at the close of his life, to perpetuate the remembrance of the alliance contracted by his ministry between God and the people of Israel ? All Israel flew to arms in order to combat those who dwelt beyond the Jordan, immediately that they suspected them of raising altars to strange gods ; but did it not lay down its arms as soon as it understood that the stones raised in the form of an altar had no other object than to attest their union with the other tribes separated from them by the Jordan ? Did not Samuel also ?³ raise a stone as a monument of a victory gained over the Philistines ? It is plain from these facts that, although it was forbidden to erect pillars and stones to be adored, it was nevertheless permitted to raise them with a different view : it is therefore equally plain that, although it was forbidden to make images to be adored, it was permitted to make them with other intentions.

Now that we have established the sense of the Decalogue, and proved that it only forbids the images that are made to be adored, I return to those of our adversaries who oppose the divine law to all the signs of joy, piety, and veneration expressed by Catholics before images, and I say to them ; If the precept speaks only of images made to be adored ; if it says nothing of those which might be made with another intention, as you grant that ours are, how is it that you would interdict the signs of piety expressed before these latter ? Suppose that the Israelites, having raised pillars or stones, not to adore them, but to perpetuate the remembrance of a victory, should give themselves up to rejoicing around them, and should render in their presence thanks-

¹ Josue, iv. ² I. Book of Kings ; vii. 12.

givings to the God of armies, would you in such case accuse them of prevarications? Would you say, that by their joy and canticles, they infringe the precept of Leviticus? Undoubtedly not, you will reply: for the precept spoke not of this kind of stones or columns, but only of those which should be raised to be adored. Well then, say as much with us respecting images: the Decalogue forbids not demonstrations of joy and veneration in the presence of them, since their only object is to represent to us venerable personages; for it speaks not at all of this kind of images, but only of those which should be fabricated to be adored.

Carefully examine the precepts which Moses so often inculcates against idolatry, and you will find that the images proscribed are always those which were regarded as divinities. "Turn ye not to idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods. I am the Lord your God..... Thou shalt not enter into league with the inhabitants of those countries. Thou shalt not adore their gods nor serve them. Thou shalt not do their works, but shalt destroy them and break their statues..... You heard the voice of God in Horeb, but saw not any similitude of him; lest perhaps being deceived, you might make you a graven similitude, or image of male or female, the similitude of any beasts, that are upon the earth, or of birds, that fly under heaven, or of creeping things, that move on the earth, or of fishes, that abide in the waters under the earth; lest perhaps, lifting up thy eyes to heaven, thou see the sun and the moon and all the stars of heaven, and being deceived by error, thou adore and serve them, which the Lord thy God created for the service of all the nations which are under the heaven, &c."¹ These and other similar passages prove that the legislator always contemplates and denounces the images—the idols of the Gentiles, the divinities of metal and stones, which they adored, and to which they offered sacrifice. Such are the images which God held in abomination. Such and such only are the images before which he forbids his people to fall prostrate, after the example of the nations. In a word, the pre-

¹ Exodus xxiii. Levit. xix. 4. Deut. iv. *passim*.

cept solely refers to the idols and the worship that was paid to them throughout the world: and the denunciations of the law are confined to these idols and this worship.

After this, one might suppose that all our adversaries would have frankly acknowledged that the precept of the Decalogue regards not at all that kind of respect which images receive amongst us: but such is not the case; there are still a certain number who cannot prevail upon themselves to do us that justice. They are determined to find us guilty of a violation of the divine law; and, to this end, affect to call our images idols and our respect the worship of pagans. In so doing, the disgrace intended for us falls principally upon themselves, since nothing but hatred, prejudice or a want of sincerity could inspire such ideas and conduct. “We know,” said St. Paul,¹ “that an idol is nothing in the world.” What, in fact, was the Jupiter of the Greeks, what was his heavenly court on Olympus, but the brilliant chimeras of a misguided imagination? And, supposing the object but an ideal phantom, since it has neither being, substance, motion, nor life, what will be the representation made of it, but something still more vain and empty than the shadow itself? Pass over in your mind the other objects of idolatry, the stars, the animals of the brute creation, or if you please, the heroes and emperors whom gratitude and adulation transformed into demigods: How unquestionable soever their existence and influence might have been in this world, they could not be in the next world such as they were supposed to be; and under this point of view, the images representing them as gods, represented nothing but lies, and were themselves mere deceit and nothings. In its widest extent, therefore this saying is true: “An idol is nothing in the world.” Will the same reasoning apply to our images? They represent to us, in the saints, beings which on earth were like to us, our brethren, humble and faithful servants of God; and in heaven, beatified but still dependent souls, whose influence entirely lies in their prayers and supplications; whose happiness consists in praising and possessing their Creator; whose happy

¹ Cor. viii. 4.

existence is such as is suitable to creatures alone, and such as we ourselves shall obtain, if we imitate their example. There is, therefore, between idols and our images, considered as to their objects, an essential difference; the difference between what is reasonable and what is absurd, between truth and impossibility, between being and nothing.

The difference is not less striking between the worship of idols and that of our images. The pagans had carried their credulity so far as to imagine that they contemplated the divinity itself in their statues. They thought that it was present within them, whether it was that the gods descended into the images prepared for them, and thus became incorporated with corruptible matter, or that, by virtue of the consecration, they were attracted to them. In whatever manner they understood it, they regarded the statues as inhabited by gods who lived and breathed within them, who saw with their eyes, heard with their ears, and eat with their mouths: All this is so extravagant that we cannot conceive it: but the fact is certain, with the exception only of some few enlightened individuals. All authors, sacred and profane, bear testimony to it. We can have no doubt of it, since Arnobius¹ testifies it of himself. "Lately, O profound blindness! I was venerating images that came from the hand of the workman, and were formed by the anvil and the hammer.....as if the Divinity was present in them; I praised them; I spoke to them, and asked favors of them.....I thought that wood and stone were gods, or that gods dwelt in these different materials."² In

¹ B. I. against the Gentiles.

² Since revelation has dispersed the darkness that obscured human reason, we find it difficult to conceive the excessive stupidity of the pagans. Having lost sight of the infinite Intelligence, which had created the universe, and perceiving nothing but what was sensible and material, they adored the heavens, the stars, the elements, the earth, animals, rivers, fountains, and nature in general. The best discoveries of the most cultivated people were to figure to themselves gods under human shape, clothed with bodies like ours, but more vigorous and active, of more noble shape and proportions, and enjoying perpetual youth; endowed moreover with the power of traversing space in rapid chariots, and of shrouding themselves in a cloud from the sight of mortals, for they refused them none of these excellencies. They believed also that it was the power of art and imagina-

consequence of this belief, they feared them, and beheld them with admiration; they addressed to them their prayers and vows; and offered victims in sacrifice to them. They religiously returned thanks for the favors supposed to be received from them: even misfortunes, destined to call man back to his God, led them to the feet of their idols, which they endeavored to appease by supplications and offerings. In a word, they solemnly rendered to them all that homage which constitutes divine worship. In this deplorable blindness of the Gentiles, the Creator was forgotten; Providence was annihilated; and God had neither altars nor adorers. Such was the worship and the crime of idolatry.

Both have ceased together with it, wherever the light of Jesus Christ has penetrated; and in the worship, which he substituted for that of idols, God alone has his adorers, temples, altars, and sacrifice. How impenetrable soever may be his decrees, we confess that every thing happens in the universe by his providence; that he has created every thing, that he governs and supports every thing by his almighty hand, without which his creatures would return to their original nothing. "To Him belongs sovereign praise; to Him alone the acknowledgment of an absolute and all-powerful empire, and homage for the existence received, not only for that which makes us men, but for that also

tion to produce an exact resemblance of them: witness the statue of Ceres, which Verres had the audacity to remove from its temple, which was such a statue that, by Cicero's account* "those who held it, believed that they saw the goddess herself, or her effigy fallen from heaven, and not made by the hand of man;" witness again the famous Olympian Jupiter, to which Phidias imparted such majesty that he had rendered it more adorable, and that the grandeur of the work equalled that of the god, according to the saying of Quintillian.† The prince of statuaries had executed it on the ideas of Homer, the great theologian of Grecian mythology, the incomparable poet, who of all men had spoken most nobly of the gods, and in whom nevertheless not a word is found that might lead us to suspect that he thought of any thing incorporeal.

"Hesiod," says Eusebius,‡ "was of opinion that there were not less than 30,000 gods upon the earth. For my part I find a still greater number of creators amongst men, both in wood and in stone." Has it not been wittily said, by an ancient, speaking of Rome, that there were in that city more divinities than men? What would have become of us then, if it had not been for Christianity?

* Art. III. against Verres. † Inst. Orat. LXII. ‡ Evang. Prep. C. XV. B. V.

which make us saints and agreeable to our Creator."¹ They who acknowledged that there is nothing in man but what God has given; no grace or power but what he has deigned to impart, can never be supposed to believe that of their own strength and power the saints descend and animate the statues and images representing them. Did ever a Catholic artist, employed in producing one or the other, imagine that he was working the habitation of a demigod?² Did ever a Catholic nation entreat the blessed spirits to descend into the statues prepared for them, or to forsake them on the approach of a profane and victorious party?³ Alas! to what questions are we compelled to stoop, to repel this too shameful comparison instituted between the respect paid to our images and the worship of idols?

You will discover still further, Sir, the difference between the two, when you become better acquainted with the reasons that induce us to admit images into our Churches, and with the use we make of them. Some represent to us the facts of sacred history, sometimes the beneficent and miraculous works of our Saviour, sometimes the actions, the combats, and trials of his martyrs; and then they refresh the memory of them in those who had known them before, or they teach them to those who, being unable to read, had till then been ignorant, of them. For painting speaks, to every eye, and is understood by the rudest mind:⁴ it is the only book of the ignorant, and is also the book of cultivated minds, who relish its expressions with exquisite sensibility. Both the one and the other find subjects of edification and a fund of pious meditations and religious sentiments; and all, after attentively surveying them, must return better instructed and better disposed. Sometimes the painting, that represents but one person, recalls to our mind a whole life of virtues and good deeds. By catching our eye it captivates our attention and steals upon our heart. Is it our Saviour himself? We prostrate in spirit with profound

¹Bossuet "Olim truncus eram...cum faber incertus scamnum faceretne Priapum. maluit esse deum." Hor.

²When a place had been consecrated, and they were desirous to desecrate it, the genii were with great solemnity conjured to retire: and when a town was about to be taken by assault, their guardian gods were besought to depart, and go over to the camp of the conqueror, where they would be better served.

⁴"Solet enim etiam pictura tacens in parietibus loqui, plurimumque prodesse." Greg. Nyss.

adoration ; we implore his mercies and his graces. Is it his blessed mother, one of his martyrs or saints ? We represent them to ourselves such as they were upon earth, such as they are in heaven ; we unite ourselves to them, to thank God for the graces, with which he has favored them ; we beg them to unite with us in asking of God those graces of which we stand in need. Thus do we pass from the image to the original, from the original to our Creator, who is always the term of our thoughts, the only object to which we tend, the principal, and even, eventually, the only object that attracts our prayers and animates all our worship. What a pitiable allegation, to pretend that we confine our thoughts and prayers to the canvas or the marble ! Know, Sir, that our ideas go far beyond : The visible inanimate matter conducts us to the real but invisible object : the latter is the term ; the former the natural means of arriving at it. How should they fall into this kind of idolatry, who especially honor the apostles and the first martyrs, for having combated and destroyed it ; they who in their holy solemnities sing with the Royal Prophet : “ Let them be all confounded, who adore graven things, and who glory in their idols.” Ps. 96. v. 7.—How is it possible to suspect those, whom the Church¹ forbids to put any confidence in images, or to offer up any prayer to them, because they possess no power or virtue whatsoever ? We make use of statues and paintings, because man, being composed of body and soul, stands in need of sensible objects to awaken the affections of his heart, and fix the mobility of his mind : we place them honorably in the house of God, because the subjects they represent to us are his friends and servants, and the sentiments with which they inspire us powerfully lead us to him ; we suffer, when ignorance and fanaticism insult the representations of our Redeemer or of the saints, and this, with much more reason no doubt, than loyal and faithful subjects lament to see insensate revolt overthrowing the statue of a respected sovereign, or of a beloved minister. For the rest, a mere glance is sufficient for passing to the original, to which our thoughts, prayers and affections are turned ; and if it were pos-

¹ Counc. of Trent, Sess. XXV.

sible in human language always to express ourselves with rigorous precision, instead of the worship of images, we ought to say, the worship of the saints in the presence of their images. For, again it must be observed,¹ there is nothing in our honors, veneration and prayers, but what is entirely referred to the originals.²

Enlightened Protestant theologians have not been wanting to justify us from the reproaches of idolatry, or of prevarication against the divine law. They have acknowledged that our principles were really free from both. Still however they would suppress images, because, say they, if for the well instructed they are unobjectionable, it is at least to be feared that they will draw the ignorant and stupid multitude into idolatry. Incapable of rising above their senses, they naturally must confine themselves to the image, suppose some inherent virtue therein, give it their confidence, and address to it their prayers. This seems to me the most reasonable objection that can be opposed to this part of our worship. I should consider it to be decisive, if the danger, on which the objection entirely rests, were as real as they seem to imagine. For idolatry is so abominable before God, that nothing should be neglected to guard the people against it: and

¹ "Imaginis enim honor in prototypum resultat."—Conc. 11. Nic. act. VII.

² God has often granted miraculous cures to fervent prayers made in presence of images. He has performed them to display the glory of the saints, and to recompense the faith and piety of those, who had ardently solicited their intercession. The report of a miracle soon spreads abroad, it brings the place and the image into public notice; the image from that time is called miraculous; this is a received expression, but too concise to give with exactitude the correct idea to be formed of it. This image is only miraculous inasmuch as a miracle has been wrought by God before it. The miracle is not attributable to the place, because it might equally have happened any where else; nor to any virtue peculiar to the image, because it has no more than any other image; and because according to the doctrine of the Church, there is no such virtue inherent in any image. It is therefore to be attributed to the gratuitous favor of God, and to the dispositions of the petitioner; above all, to that lively and strong faith, which is the soul of prayer and forms its merit and excellency.

Far from disapproving of the conduct of those, who undertake a pilgrimage to visit any particular image, renowned for some miraculous occurrence, I consider it to be very praiseworthy, if piety instigate such conduct. It is certain that the remembrance of what has passed before this image, the sight of the places even which have witnessed it, must contribute to rouse fervor; and each one may humbly hope the like favor by asking it with the like dispositions.

if images led them to it, certainly there should be no hesitation in suppressing them. The sacrifice would be so much the more indispensable, as we have never considered them to be necessary. Those missionaries would undoubtedly be very imprudent, who, beginning to establish themselves amongst infidels, should expose images in their rising Church. There would be too much reason to fear that Neophytes would consider them something similar to the images they had till then been accustomed to behold. For it is difficult to become entirely divested of the impressions of infancy and education. This perhaps was the motive which suggested to the Fathers of the ancient Council of Elvira the prohibition to paint upon the walls of the Churches any image of Him, whom we ought to adore. The faithful of that country (Spain) were undoubtedly but too recently converted from idolatry, which still was prevailing around them. Perhaps also, for the same reason, the apostles and their first successors did not make use of images. Their great object was to destroy idolatry, and to break every bond, by which men had been attached to it. An appearance, a more shadow, would have sufficed to recall ideas, which example and habit had left impressed upon their minds: and in order to root them out efficaciously, prudence required that no image should be presented to their devotion.¹

But when the idols were overthrown, when the people, now become Christians, had thoroughly learned, on the one hand, the absurdity of addressing inanimate matter, statues without eyes to see, and without ears to hear, on the other, the abomination of substituting them for the Creator or Sovereign master: what danger could there then be in inviting them to fix their eyes, either on the image of Christ, in order to become more penetrated

¹ Besides this reason, which alone should be sufficient, one cannot see how the first Christians hunted out and put to death for their religion, could, without exposing themselves to be discovered, have executed statues or paintings; or where they could have placed them at the time when they had neither Basilicks nor Chapels; when, obliged to conceal their assemblies from the knowledge of their persecutors, they met sometimes in one house, and sometimes in another, and not unfrequently in subterraneous vaults in the Catacombs. They were then compelled to confine themselves to what was absolutely necessary for the celebration of the sacred worship; and images were not necessary.

with the sentiments of love and adoration due to his divine person, or on that of an apostle or martyr, in order to form, as far as possible, an idea of the original, to honor his virtues, his courage and constancy, and to ask his intercession? And now that Christianity has for so many ages prevailed amongst us, what danger would they see in images, when the faithful learn from their infancy that it is forbidden, "to ask any favor of them, or put any confidence in them:"¹ when they are brought up to believe that "there is in images no inherent virtue, for which they ought to be revered;"² that they are merely adapted to excite in us the remembrance of the originals; and that if we prostrate or bend the knee before them, it is entirely to the original, that is, to Jesus Christ, or his saints, that this suppliant posture must be referred: to Jesus Christ, for the purpose of adoration; to the saints, for that of veneration. Where can be found the least peril in all this? How is idolatry to enter into minds fortified by so simple and reasonable a doctrine? Again, supposing this danger were to be apprehended, is it to be supposed that we should have stood in need to be admonished of it by those, who have so improperly called themselves reformers, or reformed? The Church would have been the first to take alarm and forbid a practice become dangerous: it is she, who holds the deposit of Revelation, she who preserves and transmits it, in all its integrity, by the divine assistance which never shall be wanting to her; and it is she therefore alone whom we must hear. What then does she say? That "it is good and useful to have and to keep in the temples the images of Jesus Christ and his saints."³ After this, what importance can we attach to these great dangers which prejudiced persons imagine they discover? We can do no otherwise than regard them as imaginary and chimerical.

Hear, I pray, Sir, what a great Pope⁴ wrote to a Bishop of Marseilles, who with inconsiderate zeal had destroyed the images of the saints, under the pretext that they must not be adored.

¹ Counc. of Trent, Sess. XXV. ² Ibid. Sess. XXV.—³ Second council of Nice.
⁴ St. Greg. the Great, Epis. to Serenus, an. 599.

“If you had forbidden them to be adored, we should only have to praise you. But we blame you for having broken them. Tell me, my brother, have you ever heard that any priest ever did what you have done? If by nothing else, you ought at least to have been restrained by the consideration that you were not the only saint, the only prudent person among your brethren: it is one thing to adore the painting, another thing to learn from it what we must adore. What Scripture shews to those who can read, that painting shews to the illiterate who can only look.” After having pointed out what he should have done, the learned pontiff teaches him what method he should adopt to instruct his people, and to bring them back to the use of images without danger. The whole of this letter is admirable, truly pastoral, and worthy of the noble mind from which it emanated.

Such is the language that Zuinglius, Calvin, and their disciples would have held, if they had been really desirous of promoting religion by a prudent reformation. They would not have sought for models among heretics of the eighth century; they would have disdained to copy the furious invectives and outrages of the insensate Copronymus and his servile clergy; they would have blushed to adopt the extravagant notions of what was most contemptible in the world, I mean ignorant Jews and Mahometans. But by developing the just ideas that should be formed respecting images, by condemning the negligence of the pastors, who perhaps at that time did not give their flocks the necessary instruction, they would have entered into the views of the Church and her Councils. They would have removed abuses and dangers, and maintained sound principles and peace in the world, instead of filling it with calumnious declamations; with tumult, devastation and profanation. I like to believe, Sir, that there is no reasonable and Christian person, of whatever communion, who does not deplore the scenes which Iconoclast fury has renewed since the Reformation; no one who can at this day refuse his regret for the loss of monuments, equally as precious for the arts as for piety. To deplore these outrages is not sufficient: they ought to be repaired as far as possible, and the respect and

honor, which your ancestors so unjustly took away from images, should be restored to them. What is to be feared by the more general adoption in your Church of the sound principles of ours? They need only to be exposed in their simplicity. Being plain and intelligible they can contain neither poison nor danger for the people; particularly amongst you, and all Protestant societies, with whom even possible abuses in the worship of images are so carefully exposed. When once it is proved and conceded that no divine law forbids it and that simple instruction may prevent all abuse and danger, it would be reasonable to embrace the advantages it offers. Who is ignorant of the admirable effects of painting? Who has not felt its charm and its power? Where is the man so gross, so unfortunately organized, as never to have experienced the impression; which it has at all times made on sensible, enlightened and generous minds? "Appear now," cried out in former times an eloquent orator,¹ "appear, ye admirable painters! Let your pencils give the last finish to a subject, which I have only been able to sketch! By the magic of your colors bring boldly forward upon your canvas the crowned champion, whom I have but feebly penciled. Surpassed by the expression, that you will give to the combats and the triumphs of the Martyr, I shall withdraw, cheerfully yielding the palm to your talents."

Another orator² living about the same time, in a discourse pronounced at Constantinople, described as follows, a painting of the sacrifice of Abraham. "I have often seen it, but never without shedding tears, because art represented so correctly to the eye that terrible scene, that one seemed to be present at it. Isaac is on his knees before the altar, with his hands bound behind his back. The father approaches, seizes with his left hand the locks of his son, drags him towards him, bends over the head of his child, who turns round and casts on his father a look of anguish and despair. Abraham raises his right arm to strike; the edge of the sword has just reached the body, when it is checked in its progress by the voice, that has just been heard

¹ St. Basil, Disc. on the Mart. Barlaam. ² St. Greg. Nyss.

from the heavens." St. Augustin praises in high terms a beautiful composition on the same subject; and in a sermon for the feast of St. Stephen, he gives an account of a painting, in which his martyrdom was represented. The Jews were putting him to death; at a distance, Saul was keeping their clothes, and under a shower of stones Stephen was still preserving the most ravishing features of composure and sweetness. Shall we here forget the painting, to which Mary of Egypt was indebted for the tears of repentance, and the crown of heaven? Seduced from the age of twelve years in Alexandria, this weak female had there pursued, for some years, the course of her disorders. She becomes desirous of changing the scene of her wickedness; she passes to Jerusalem; here an immense concourse of people were assembled to celebrate the feast of the exaltation of the true cross. In the midst of her follies, she still would go with the crowd, to contemplate the very wood, which saw the Son of God expire and saved the world. Already was she entering the Church of Calvary, when, all at once, she finds herself held back by an invisible power, which she tries in vain to resist. She retires in astonishment, perceives in the porch an image of the blessed Virgin, eyes it with fixed attention, reads in it all the shame and horror of her conduct, falls upon her knees, melts into tears, and devotes herself to the penitential austerities of a desert. There she terminates a long life of penance by a death, the account of which affects us even unto tears.

What need is there to expatiate upon the power of ancient paintings, to seek after models which no longer exist, whilst we find some so very near our own times? I have under my eyes a mere engraving, executed according to the design of Frère Girardon. It represents our Saviour upon the cross, his mother and St. John raising their eyes with a look of resignation; as if to offer their sacrifice to heaven; on the other side of the cross, Magdalene sitting with clasped hands, with disheveled hair, and the keenest anguish expressed in every feature the most hardened sinner could not, for two minutes, steadfastly contemplate this

affecting representation, without feeling the pangs of remorse in his breast.

Perhaps in your travels, you may have remarked at Potsdam, the bust of a Christ crowned with thorns. Never was I so struck with any composition. Our Saviour suffers with great fortitude, but not like other men. The anguish that he feels, and the extreme thirst produced by it are so exclusively appropriate to Jesus Christ that they are referable to Him alone. It is the suffering of a God-man; the two natures are, if I may be allowed the expression, here visible. This master-piece appeared to me to be the last effort of genius; it is Raphael's. Who has not heard of the communion of St. Jerome? The venerable Cenobite, almost a centenarian, bent down in adoration even more than with the weight of years, his feeble hands humbly joined, but his eye enkindled by faith; the august and imposing majesty of the pontiff, who advances towards him with the consecrated host in his hand, and the assistant priests, struck with religious awe; in this sublime composition every thing announces the loftiness of the mysteries, every thing bespeaks the presence of God concealed under the sacred species. A Calvinist pencil would never trace out any thing equal to this.¹

I will say no more upon the happy effects of painting, lest I should weaken by my words what I am enabled to feel much bet-

¹ Europe in these our days, swarms with designers and painters: and notwithstanding posterity will be astonished to find so few paintings produced in an age, when so many are manufactured. In order to produce eminent painters, it is not sufficient to place before their eyes the most finished models, to multiply exhibitions, and enhance the value of them: in addition to this, and above all things, it is necessary to cultivate the soul; and I can discover in them no sign that they are sensible of any deficiency in this particular. And yet it is from the soul that grand conceptions arise, and it is above all, from divine revelation, that the soul derives them; for there is nothing beautiful or sublime but truth. If the celebrated masters, who, in former ages, carried painting to such perfection, had not received a more Christian education than is given now-a-days, how many master-pieces would never have seen the light? I speak here only of principles, and not of morals, which too often but ill correspond with them. No artist, irreligious from ignorance, or indifferent from example, will ever rise to the grand and sublime. He will perhaps excel in correctness of design, and in the blending of colors; he may catch a likeness, and may describe, with more or less success, empassioned scenes, battles, animals, flowers, landscapes. But never expect from

ter than to express. I pity the Protestant societies, which, discovering abuses where none exist, and dangers where we see none, sacrifice to prejudices and chimerical fears the real advantages, which images and paintings present in the way of instruction and piety. Why not lay before the ignorant the only book they can read, and before well-instructed persons the remembrance of facts and persons, that they are so liable to forget? Why not strike sinners by objects, which create remorse within them and lead them to virtue, by their silent reproaches? Why not console the faithful, by presenting examples and motives for their encouragement? In fine, why deprive them of so rich and varied a fund of salutary reflections, and of support in the trials of life; and deprive them of the inexhaustible and natural nourishment of a feeling devotion? I could wish, for our separated brethren, that they would resolve upon making the experiment. I would engage that their Churches should not be loaded with images and paintings, as some of ours are. I would even go so far as to advise their being more sparing of them, provided they would exercise proportionate taste in the selection of them.¹

him compositions resembling those which I have mentioned. Whence should he derive such characters? He can form no conception of them. How should he give to the human face a celestial expression, when he has not even an idea of it?

It must be allowed that modern foolish philosophy, full of self-sufficiency, and void of sense, has not been less fatal to the fine arts than to good morals. By confining man's attention to the earth, it has narrowed his mind, and debased his heart; it has extinguished both genius and taste. When man once becomes a mere animal, he will naturally and necessarily crawl upon the earth.

¹If the Reformers had confined themselves to complaining that our Churches are frequently overloaded with wretched representations, which far from exciting piety, distress the eye, I would willingly have passed my condemnation upon such an abuse. It is easy to defend our representations on principles of theology, but not always on principles of taste. A number of small altars, affixed to the pillars of a great basilick, and also of wretched sculptures of wood gilded or silvered over; a crowd of angelic but far from aerial figures, clumsily and heavily placed about the altar or the pulpit, sometimes encumber beautiful edifices, detract from the majestic simplicity and the noble proportions, which the artist had produced. Too frequently the paintings are so rudely daubed, are crowded with such extravagant embellishments, that in very truth we are compelled to turn our eyes away from them. It is to be regretted that there has been given to them in the Churches, a place of honor, which ought to have been reserved for works

But if such powerful reasons should not yet suffice to persuade them, let them yield to example at least and to the voice of antiquity. For to pretend, as some have done, that it neither knew nor made use of images, is to betray a very superficial knowledge of its belief and practice, or a want of fair dealing towards us. He who is not a stranger to the monuments of the first ages, must candidly acknowledge that images are discovered near the apostolic times, that they are found to have been held in honor and veneration, as soon as it was possible they should be, that is, after the fall of idolatry and the end of the persecutions, when all apprehensions were banished. Then the Christians were permitted to have public temples, and with the first basilicks appeared the images of Jesus Christ, and his mother and the saints.

Will they who dispute the fact of these representations being in ancient times venerated in the Church, pretend to know more about those distant periods than the celebrated Photius, whose vast erudition is still so much admired, and who, in a single work¹ gives us the analysis of 480 ecclesiastical writers, who for the most part are not come down to us? Now this learned man treats the heresy of the Iconoclasts as barbarous, and testifies that the second council of Nice² “unanimously decided and confirmed, on the *traditions of the apostles and holy fathers*, that the image of Jesus Christ, our Lord, was to be respected, in honor of him whom it represented.” Will they pretend to possess respecting the first ages of the Church, information more certain and extensive than the Fathers of the eighth general

of superior merit. I know that master-pieces are rarely to be found: but copies of them may be multiplied, and these copies would be always preferable to compositions which fall below mediocrity.

The ancient Church would have rejected the greater part of our paintings and sculptures: neither should we have seen them, I venture to assert it, if the bishops had been more careful to examine them before their admission. The council of Trent, and afterwards the Synods held at Milan, under St. Charles, at Cologne, at Paris, &c. make it a duty in them to exclude every representation, the execution of which should not correspond with the dignity of the original, and should not be adapted to excite the devotion of the faithful.

¹ Library of Photius. ² Can. of Œcum. Council. C. VII.

council?¹ “It is just *according to the most ancient tradition*,” says these Fathers, “that images should derive some lustre from all the honor which is rendered to their originals.” Will they pretend to enter into disputations with the Fathers of the seventh general council² respecting periods so remote from them? Observe with what confidence these Fathers appeal to the highest tradition, to establish the honor paid to sacred images, and lay the basis of their decisions on the principles I have elsewhere developed, principles which have ensured and will for ever ensure the immoveable authority of the Church. They deliver them in these terms: “We unanimously declare that we wish to keep the traditions received and consecrated by Scripture or custom.... Walking in this royal way, and being firmly supported by the doctrine of the holy Fathers, by the tradition of the Catholic Church, in which the Spirit of God resides we define.... that images should be placed in our temples.... to the end that at the sight of these sacred representations, they who behold them may transport to their prototypes their mind, their thoughts and desires.”

Would our modern iconomachs have dared to call images a novelty in the Church, if they had remarked this passage of St. Augustin?³ The saint was speaking of a book of magic, which the pagans had attempted to attribute to Christ: “Then, considering to which of the apostles they should make our Saviour address himself in this work, Peter and Paul came into their minds, from having often seen them, I suppose in many places represented in paintings together with their Divine Master.” Would they have called images a novelty, if they had remarked in St. Ambrose⁴ the manner in which he relates the apparition he had of Gervase and Protase? “It was,” says he “the third night: I was overcome with much watching, and rather in a kind of stupor than asleep: they both appeared to me, accompanied with a third person, who resembled blessed Paul, whose countenance I knew from the portraits I had seen of him.” If they

¹ An. 869. ² An. 787. ³ On the agreement of the Gospels, B. I. ch. X. ⁴ Sermon on SS. Gervase and Protase.

had observed in the life of the great St. Basil, written by his successor,¹ the following passage: "This holy man would often remain standing before an image of our lady, near to which was also represented a celebrated martyr. He remained standing and in prayer, praying to be delivered from the apostate and impious Julian." If they had known of these words of St. Basil, so often quoted from him: "The honor of the image passes to its original;" and the beautiful fragment of a letter written by this great bishop to the Emperor Julian, his former schoolfellow?² According to the Christian faith, which comes from God and is without spot, I believe in one only God Almighty, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost.... I receive the apostles, prophets and martyrs; I *invoke them*, that they may pray for me, and that, through their intercession, God may be propitious to me, and may pardon my faults. For this reason *I respect and honor their images*, principally because we are instructed to do so by *the tradition of the holy apostles*, and because far from such images being prohibited, they appear in our Churches." What more can be desired in favor of our cause, than to find it fixed, in the middle of the fourth century, even on an apostolical tradition, by the most correct theologian of the Greek Church? And yet we are able to refer to witnesses of still greater antiquity.

"Far be it from us Christians to adore images as gods, after the manner of the Greeks.³ We confine ourselves to shewing our affection and love for the original, the representation of which is placed before us. Wherefore, when the features of the image are effaced, we make no difficulty in burning as useless the wood, from which it had been formed." We learn from pope Damasus, that under the Pontificate of St. Silvester,⁴ the Emperor Constantine erected the Basilick bearing his name, and that among the magnificent presents, with which he ornamented this Church, "there was to be seen the statue of our Saviour worked in silver,

¹ Helladius, Bish. of Cesar. an. 380. ² Frag. of Epist. CCV. quoted in 2nd. council of Nice. ³ St. Athanasius, an. 330. Quest. and Rep. to Antiochus, No. 38. ⁴ An. 320.

of the weight of a hundred and twenty pounds, seated on a chair of the same metal, and five feet in height: the statues also of the twelve Apostles, each five feet high, and weighing ninety-pounds, &c." Here then we have the statues of our Saviour and his Apostles in the first temple, that the Emperors raised to God. And as for paintings, them we find mentioned in St. Basil, whose apostrophe to painters I have given before; in the description which Gregory of Nazianzum gives of the Church built by his father; for he there expressly say, that it was ornamented with paintings of workmanship so finished and perfect, that they yielded in nothing to nature: in a description given by Gregory of Nyssa of a Church, in which all the scenes of the protracted martyrdom, endured by Theodorus, were admirably represented; instruments of punishment, tortures, burning furnace, the martyr in the flames, the horrible figures of the tyrants appearing by the light of the flames, and the image of Jesus Christ presiding over the combat of his generous champion, &c.

Tertullian, impelled by the severity of his character to the excesses of the Montanists, reproached the Catholics for granting peace and absolution to adulterers, and for justifying this indulgence from the parable of the good pastor, *represented on the chalices*.¹ These last words, used accidentally, are become for posterity a ray of light and evidence. They manifestly shew that sacred representations were not unknown to the primitive Church. At a time when she had neither temples, nor fixed places of assembly, it would have been impossible for her to put up images, as she did afterwards: but she had portable ones, attached to the sacred vessels employed in the sacrifice, the only ones which could agree with her situation, then precarious and uncertain. Tertullian again alludes to it in the same work,² where he says: "Let us now produce the paintings on the chalices." And because at the end of the second century this author speaks of the paintings on the chalices, as of general prevalence, there will certainly be no presumption in referring it to the apostolical ages.

¹ Book on Chastity, ch. X. ² Ib. 7.

I cannot conclude these quotations without adding a fact, which may gratify your curiosity. Eusebius¹ relates it in these terms: "It is said that the woman laboring under a flux of blood, and miraculously cured by our Saviour, as we read in the Gospel, was a native of Cesarea-Philippi; that her house is still shewn there; and that, to perpetuate the remembrance of the benefit she had received, she had placed before her door, on a pedestal of stone, a brazen statue of a woman on her knees, stretching forth her suppliant hands; near her, another brazen statue of a man clothed in a long robe, in a standing posture, with one hand extended towards the woman. At the foot of the man was growing an unknown herb, which, touching the fringe of his garment, acquired the virtue of healing all sorts of diseases. It is positively asserted that this statue represented Jesus Christ; and we can testify to its present existence, having seen it with our own eyes in a journey we took to Cesarea. There is nothing surprising in people, who are born among pagans, having raised statues to our Saviour, in gratitude for the benefit he had conferred upon them during his life, since we have seen portraits of the apostles Peter and Paul and of Jesus Christ, which are still preserved in our days. It is probably a custom derived from the ancient pagans, who honored in this manner their benefactors and protectors." In these cures, we may discover the finger of God, and in this miraculous herb an apology for Christian images, proclaimed by heaven itself.² Let us conclude the interesting account of this celebrated monument. It existed entire in the time of Eusebius, who declares that he had seen it. It was destroyed by Julian the apostate, in the manner related by Sozomen,³ more than a century after Eusebius. "Julian the apostate having been informed that at Cesarea-Philippi was still preserved the statue that had been raised to Jesus Christ by the

¹ Eccles. Hist. B. VII.

² Whether the cures of this miraculous herb are now-a-days admitted or not, it is most evident, from this account of Eusebius, that they were believed in those primitive times. They were, therefore, persuaded at that time, that heaven did not disapprove indiscriminately of the erection of images.

³ Book V. C. 20.

woman healed of the flux of blood, sent orders to demolish it, and to put his own in its place. This order was executed. But immediately, fire from heaven struck the statue of Julian on the breast, and struck off the head and the neck. From that day the fragment has remained discolored, as a proof of its having been struck with lightning. The soldiers of Julian had so violently torn away the statue of Christ, that it had been broken. But the Christians, having collected the pieces, replaced the statue in the Church, where it is still preserved."

The modern Iconoclasts have but too often renewed the violence of Julian and his satellites, whereas Catholics have always taken pride in praising and imitating the zeal and religious respect of the Christians of Cesarea.

Let me, however, caution you Sir, not to imagine that I comprise in the modern Iconoclasts all the members of the Protestant religion. The Calvinistic societies, although they have been the most loud in their clamors, and the most violent in their hostility against images, have still furnished apologists for them: and Daillé himself, who has written so much against us on this subject, has not been able to find us deserving of condemnation, except by palming upon us principles which never were ours. When he allows that they entertain for images the same veneration and respect as for the altars, the sacred vessels, and the holy books, without knowing it he is in perfect accordance with us. For we ask for them neither more respect nor veneration. All Lutheranism professes on this question the principles which we all profess. Luther and all his followers have a hundred times refuted the iconomachs, and justified images from the imputation of idolatry, or prevarications against the Decalogue. They have preserved them in their Churches, as monuments calculated to refresh the memory with holy things, and to excite sentiments of piety. "It is very certain that there is no virtue in images, and therefore that we cannot adore them nor pray before them, but inasmuch as they are a visible means of exciting in us the remembrance of Christ and heavenly things. And if we would adore or invoke God before an image, we must put ourselves in

the same disposition, in which the Israelites were before the brazen serpent, beholding it with respect, but placing their faith not in the serpent but in God." Do you not imagine that you have just been hearing the words of a Catholic writer? Know however that it is the learned Molanus whom you have heard, the oracle of the Lutherans in the last century. "He said that they would easily agree upon this article, by retrenching the abuses which moderate Catholics do not approve of;" he might have added: and which the council of Trent condemns, and orders to be suppressed.

I should have no difficulty in producing distinguished divines of your Church also, who have spoken in praise of images. In the first place, I know of none who disapprove of them as historical subjects relating to religion; some have made no difficulty in making use of them. The learned bishop Montague declares in his Appeal, C. XXI. that they are of great use in exciting emotions of piety, and that there is no doubt, for example, that we remember more feelingly, and are more effectually empas- sioned with the death, blood-shed and bitter passion of our Saviour, when we see that history fully and lively represented to us in colors, or worked by a skilful hand. "The pictures of Christ," says he again, "the blessed Virgin and saints, may be made, had in houses, set up in Churches; the Protestants use them; they despight them not. Respect and honor may be given unto them: the Protestants do it, and use them for helps for piety, in re-memoration, and more effectual representation, of the prototype." (Gagger, p. 318. and Appeal, c. XXI.) He says again in the Contents, "That images may effect the minds of religious men, by representing unto them the actions of Christ and his saints; in which regard," continues he, "all reverence simply cannot be abstracted from them." Other doctors have held among you the same language. Your archbishop Laud, was for reverence, not only before and towards, but to the altar; as we learn from a speech of his delivered in the Star-Chamber, the 14th of June, 1637. In it he thus addresses the Lords of the Garter. "I hope a poor Priest may worship God with as

lowly reverence as you do, since you are bound by your order, and by your oath, according to a constitution of Henry the fifth (as appears in Libro Nigro Windesoriensi) to give due honor and reverence Domino Deo, et Altari ejus, in modum virorum Ecclesiasticorum; that is, to the Lord your God, and to his Altar: (for there is a reverence due to that too, though such as comes far short of divine worship) and this in the manner as ecclesiastical persons both "worship and do reverence." (p. 49.) Now, if this honor may be allowed to the very altar, why not to the images of Christ, and in proportion, to those also of saints? It seems to me, Sir, that the authorities and reason I have presented, ought to be quite sufficient to remove your ancient prejudices against images, and fully to justify the honors which, among us, are paid to them on account of their originals.

LETTER XVII.

On the Cross.

AFTER having disposed of so many controverted points, it is, in truth, a lamentable circumstance, that between us and you, there should still remain a difficulty to be surmounted. On the one hand, I am reduced to ask of you the reason of those injuries which are offered to the cross of my Saviour; and, on the other hand, I find it necessary to justify before Christians those honors which we render to that distinctive badge of Christianity. I have traversed your country in all directions: and I have never perceived in any part of it the consolatory sign, which advertises a Christian stranger that he is travelling in a country of brethren. Your reformation has not spared the cross: every where has it cast that holy symbol to the ground. Would it be deemed incompatible with the cross: or has it acted under the often-confuted pretext of superstition and idolatry? Has England then forgotten, that she was delivered from idolatry by the cross, and that her first apostles came with that sacred standard in their hand to liberate her from her errors and her idols? You will tell me that England has not forgotten the cross: for she still retains it in the administration of baptism. Much honor, in good sooth, do you confer upon the cross! Nothing remained, save to exclude, from the sacrament which makes us Christians, the sign by which we shew that we are Christians. And yet let us thank the divine mercy, that it has not been altogether obliterated among you. Perhaps the use of the cross in baptism, which you still retain, may eventually lead you to re-establish it in the credit and honors of which your ancestors have so unjustly despoiled it.

In fact, by what right did they remove it from the temples and altars, and pull it down in town and country? By what right did they forbid Christians to arm themselves, in temptation, with this salutary sign, and sign themselves with it in the criti-

cal occurrences of life, and above all, at the awful approach of death? What could they mean by so doing? Did they know what they were about? Were they aware that by banishing the cross and abolishing the use of it, they were renouncing primitive customs, and the golden age of Christianity? By their account, their object was to revive it, to establish themselves most firmly upon antiquity, and, by a wise reformation, to restore the Church to her own original beauty and purity. So they said; and so, if you wish it, they believed; but, if they did believe it, their knowledge of Christian antiquity must have been scanty indeed. They could not have read these passages from St. Augustin¹ among many others of the same Father: "The sign of the cross is a rampart to friends, an obstruction to enemies. By it commences the instruction of the catechumens, by it the baptismal fonts are consecrated, by it the baptised receive with the imposition of hands all the gifts of the Holy Spirit; by it the basilicks are dedicated, the altars consecrated; the sacraments administered; by it again the priests, the levites are promoted to holy orders: in a word, there is no sacrament in the Church which is not conferred by the mysterious virtue of this sign." If a catechumen is asked:² "Do you believe in Christ?" he replies: "Yes: and instantly makes the sign of the cross: he describes it, and carries it on his forehead, and is not ashamed." They could not have read this advice of St. Jerome:³ "Keep the door of your heart shut: frequently make on your forehead the sign of the cross, that the exterminator of Egypt may have no hold upon you." They could not have read these words of St. Ambrose:⁴ "The sign of Christ is on our forehead, and in our heart: on the forehead, to confess him always, in our heart to love him..... We ought, on awaking, to give thanks to Christ, and to begin the labors of the day by the sign of our Saviour." They could not have read the beautiful verses of Lactantius on the crucifix, and on the power of the sign of the cross to reduce the oracles to silence, nor could they have heard of these words of Tertul-

¹ Sermon on the Saints. ² Second Treatise on St. John. ³ Epist. to Demet. Sermon XLV.

lian¹ to his wife, to deter her from ever marrying an unbeliever: “Will you conceal from him your faith, when you shall make the sign of the cross upon your humble couch and on your feeble body?” or this passage again:² “Whenever we move: when we enter and go out: in dressing, in washing: at table, when we retire to rest, during conversation—we impress on our foreheads the sign of the cross—Should you ask for the Scripture authority for this and such like practices: I answer, there is none: but there is tradition that authorizes it, custom that confirms it, submission that observes it.” Here is quite sufficient to convict the reformers of gross ignorance respecting the ancient monuments of the Latin Church.

It shall now be our task to prove, that they were equally ignorant of the monuments of the Greek and Oriental Churches. Hear first St. Chrysostom:³ “This object of malediction abomination, this symbol of capital punishment, the cross, is become more illustrious than diadems and crowns.....And for this reason you find it among princes and their subjects, men and women, virgins and married people, slaves and freemen. All impress this sign upon the most noble part of the human face. For upon our forehead, as upon a column, it is every day inscribed. Thus do we behold it shining on the sacred table at the priestly ordinations.....Every where is the cross displayed, every where is it honored, in the houses, in the public place, in the deserts, on the ways, on the mountains and hills, in the valleys, on the seas and vessels, on our habits, beds, arms, vessels of gold and silver, on the paintings of our walls.....We are far from being ashamed of the cross, because it was in former times an instrument of the most disgraceful death: we deem it to be an ornament superior to diadems, crowns, and necklaces of pearls or diamonds.”

Not to accumulate here from St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Gregory of Nazianzum, and St. Epiphanius various passages which are too long for our present purpose: Protect yourself,” says St.

¹B. II. to his wife, Ch. V. ²De Corona Milit. C. III. IV. ³Demonstration against the Gentiles.

Ephrem,¹ “with the sign of the cross, as with a shield; and this, not only with your hand, but with your mind. Employ it in your studies, on going out, on returning home, when retiring to rest, and on rising in the morning. Bless the places where you walk by this sign in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is an armor of solid metal, which if you carry, nothing can harm you. See you not that he who carries any mark whatever of a terrestrial king can never be touched? How much more reason have we to fear nothing whilst we carry the badge of the Sovereign Master of heaven.” Listen to the instructions which St. Cyril of Jerusalem gave to his catechumens, similar to which no doubt were given in every Church. “Be not ashamed of the cross: if any one conceal it, do you make it openly on your forehead.....Eating, drinking, entering or leaving your houses, on retiring to rest, when rising up, make with confidence the sign of the cross upon your forehead.....Christ triumphed over the devils by the cross: boldly display the sign of it. On seeing it, they will remember Him that was crucified: they fear him, who has crushed under his feet the head of the dragon.” St. Basil,² after giving the discourse of the martyr Gordius, adds: “Having said this, the combatant of Jesus Christ arms himself with the formidable sign of the cross, and then, with great firmness of soul and an intrepid countenance, and without changing his color, he joyfully advances to meet his punishment.” “In the midst of the incantations of the devil,” says St. Athanasius,³ “only let the sign of the cross which the gentiles ridicule, be used; let Christ be merely named; the devils will be instantly put to flight: the oracles be silent: and all the arts of magic be reduced to nothing.” “For,” says Origen,⁴ such is the power of the cross, that by placing it before our eyes,

¹ On the spiritual armor.—Compare these passages with what was said by Theodore Beza, and you will lament to find the deplorable perversion of ideas which fanaticism can produce even in a man of talent and sense. “I confess,” said he, “that I feel a horror in my soul against the crucifix. It describes to me the cruelty of the Jews against Christ; and for that reason I cannot endure the sight of it.” As if the crucifix did not still more describe to him the infinite love of Jesus expiring for him, for us, and even for his executioners. ² On the martyrdom of Gordius. ³ On the incarnation. ⁴ Hom. IV. on Ep. to the Rom.

and by fixing our attention upon it, so as to consider with the eyes of the mind the death of our Saviour, neither concupiscence, lust, nor envy can prevail against us. At the sign of the cross, the whole of this carnal troop of sin takes to flight.”—“Who would not be struck with astonishment,” exclaims Eusebius¹ “at the consideration that *all who have believed in Christ*, have made use of the salutary sign of the cross, and that God in former times had announced this by his prophet:² They shall come and shall see my glory; and I will set up a sign among them?”—“At the hour of prayer,” says Justin,³ “we turn towards the east, and immediately with our right hand we sign ourselves, in the name of Christ, with the sign which is so necessary for us.”

In consequence of this primitive and general custom, Julian, who had been brought up in the Church, reproached the Nazareans for having abandoned the religion of their ancestors, and for adoring instead of the shield fallen from heaven, the wood of the cross, and for drawing the figure of it on their foreheads, and applying it to the walls of their Churches. St. Cyril, far from denying the honors rendered to the cross, developes its utility in the instruction of the people, and says to him; “Would you then have us reject the wood, whence we derive the recollection of all virtue, to entertain our children and our women with the lying fictions of our poets.”⁴ It happened that the pagans accused the first Christians of honoring all the crosses and all the malefactors that ever suffered on them: “Celsus,” said Origen, “argues much in the style of certain enemies of our doctrine, who are foolish enough to imagine that we honor all those who have been fastened to the cross, because we pay homage to Jesus crucified.”⁵ The pagan Cecilius reproaches the Christians with adoring all crosses: No,” replies Octavius, “we neither adore them, nor desire them.”⁶ For they did not adore i. e. venerate all indiscriminately, but those only which were made in imitation of the true cross. In fine, consult the liturgies of all Churches

¹ Evang. Demonstrat. B. VI. last chapter. ² Isaias, lxvi. 18. ³ Quest. CXVIII. an. 150. ⁴ St. Cyril *against Julian*, B. VI. ⁵ *Against Cels.*, IV. 11. ⁶ In Minutius Felix.

in the fifth century : there is not one in which you will not discover prayers and benedictions accompanied with signs of the cross. From this uniformity every impartial and reasonable man must conclude that this practice was recommended and set on foot by the Apostles themselves.

It is not a little remarkable that the ancient Iconoclasts, who were the first among Christians to destroy and overturn images, always respected the cross ; and more than this :¹ the bishops of the conventicle held at Constantinople, wishing to give a sacred sanction to the absurd decrees it had just passed, produced the cross and the book of the gospels, and compelled the people to swear upon them, that they would forever consider images to be idols, and those to be idolaters who should honor them.

I cannot resist, you will say, the phalanx of authorities you have arrayed against us, neither can I deny that the cross has been honored from the earliest times. But it seems to me that Catholics have passed the bounds, and, from rendering respect, have proceeded so far as to pay adoration. At this our reformers have justly taken scandal ; and to secure the people more effectually from this new kind of idolatry, they have found it necessary to withdraw the object from their eyes.

True indeed it is, Sir, that your reformers renewed against us the accusation which the pagans brought against our ancestors. These our ancestors however have taught us how to repel such a charge : our faith and doctrine are the same as theirs : so likewise shall our reply be. We will say therefore with St. Athanasius² and the whole Church : “ But if the gentiles accuse us of paying our adoration to the wood of the cross, we can separate before their eyes the two pieces which form the cross, and after having thus destroyed the image, cast the two pieces to the ground and tread them under foot ; proving by this, that our veneration is not paid to the wood, but to the figure which reminds us of Him that was crucified.” We will tell them with St. Jerome in the life of Paula : Prostrate before the cross, as if she still saw the Saviour suspended there, she adored.” We will say with St.

¹ Hist. of the Icon. ² Quest to Antiochus.

Gregory the Great: "We prostrate, it is true, before the cross, but not as before the divinity." We will say to them with Leontius, bishop of Napoli:¹ When you see Christians adoring the cross, know that they pay this adoration to Jesus crucified, and not to the wood; and that their adoration is not directed to a cross they plainly evince, when, having separated the two pieces of wood of which it is composed, they not only refrain from adoring it, but even cast the pieces on the ground or in the fire." We will tell them, in fine, with St. Ambrose:² "Helen discovered the cross of our Saviour; she adored Jesus Christ, and not the wood, which would have been to imitate the error of the pagans: but she adored him who had been suspended on this wood."

And yet, as it is incontestable that these same Fathers and many others³ have spoken of adoring the cross, and as we ourselves call one of the ceremonies of Good-Friday the adoration of the cross, we will reply to you with the Fathers of the second council of Nice and all well-informed and candid theologians, that these words *adore*, *adoration* and *worship*, are general expressions, the precise signification of which depends upon the object that is adored;⁴ when applied to any of the persons of

¹ Cited in the 2nd Council of Nice, Act. IV. and VII. ² Disc. on the death of Theod. ³ Helen acted with wisdom by placing the cross on the crown, in order that the cross of our Saviour might be adored upon the head of kings." St. Ambrose, *Ibid.*

Flecte genu, signumque crucis venerabile adora.—*Lactantius.*

⁴ I said that the general expressions, *adore*, *adoration*, *worship*, are taken in various significations: here are some examples of them. "Abraham, as soon as he saw three men standing near him, ran to meet them from the door of his tent, and adored down to the ground, (Gen. xviii. 2.)" Lot, when he saw two angels who went to Sodom, "rose up and went to meet them, and *worshipped* prostrate to the ground, (Gen. xix. 1.)" "Abraham adored the people of the land, (Gen. xxiii. 12.)" "Juda, the sons of thy father shall adore thee, (Gen. xlix. 8.)" It is written that David adored Saul, that Chusi adored Joab, that Achimaas adored the king, that Arrena adored David, that Bethsabée adored David, that Adonias adored Solomon, that the children of the prophets adored Eliseus, falling prostrate on the ground: that the Sunamite fell at his feet and adored him: that all the servants of Assuerus adored Aman, that Mardocheus alone refused to adore him: so far with illustrations from the Bible—Josephus, the historian, (Antiq. B. XIII.) says that the Jews of Samaria and Alexandria adored the temple of Garizim. Gregory of Nazianzum (Disc. XXII.) says that the mother

the Trinity, they denote our entire dependance, the supreme dominion of God, the worship of *latria*; but when applied to the saints, their relics or images, the crucifix or cross, to the altar, the sovereigns of their statues, &c., it is there nothing more than a relative veneration, a civil or religious honor. Who are

of the Macchabees adored the members of her martyred children. St. Basil exhorts to the adoration of the crib, although he elsewhere says: "It is impossible for me to adore any thing created." Chronicles and histories* mention that Charlemagne was adored as emperor by Leo II., and that he was adored after the manner in which emperors were usually adored.

From the acknowledgment of the learned of all communions, the word which, in Hebrew and Greek, signifies to *adore*, when it is applied to God, is the same that is employed to indicate the honor rendered to angels and men, in the passages of scripture that I have quoted, and in a great number of others that I have omitted. That the translation should be to be faithful, the word *adore* or *worship*, *adorare*, should every where have been used, as the vulgate has done. But protestant translators, who were anxious to prevent Catholics from demonstrating by these passages that they were borne out by the Scripture in applying this expression to angels, to men, and to venerable things, have substituted in its place the expression to *bow down before*. In their first versions they had left the word *adore*, or *worship*, in two of these passages, where it is said of Miphiboseh and Joab that they *adored* David (II. Kings, *alias* II. Samuel, ch. IX). But in the version of 1588, which is followed now, the word has been suppressed. Wherever the word *adore* or *worship* is taken in ill part, they have not heeded to change it: for example, the angel rejects the honor offered by St. John (*Apocal.* ch. XIX.) and they render it by *worship*; but, when the angels receive and approve of these same honors, they render them by *bow down before*. It is to be observed however, that in all these passages the word is the same both in Greek and Hebrew. Why is it not the same in the protestant versions? Is it not plain that their object is to excite the people against the Church, whenever they hear the word applied to creatures? But how pitiful is such a trick! and how desperate must that cause be, which, to preserve its ground amongst the people, is compelled to submit to and adopt so erroneous a version of the sacred text!—This remark has been made by an able writer (Desmahis) who, after having been a Calvinist minister, wrote against that communion a work that will never be refuted.

The minister Aubertin, so much esteemed by his own party, has proved at considerable length from some of the examples that I have produced, and from others also, that "the word *adore* or *worship*, is often employed in the sacred books and the writings of the Fathers, to express the veneration due to creatures and to religious and inanimate things; and that it is not exclusively used to express either civil homage or the adoration due to God."

* "Summus eundem præsul adoravit." Poet sex. See. *His. of the Icono*, B. IV. Maimbourg.

better calculated to pronounce upon the sense of a general expression than those who employ it? Do our adversaries pretend to know better than ourselves what we mean to express? Is it not strange that they absolutely will have us to adore the wood of the crucifix, whilst we know and incessantly declare that, when we prostrate before it, it is Jesus Christ alone whom we adore? We represent him then to our eyes and minds, and behold him in his image, as if he were actually present: we fall at his feet, kiss his wounds, and water them with our tears: less favored than Magdalen and Thomas, for us the scene is all in imagination; we can do no more. Where is the excess in all this? How can our homage and adoration be said to rest upon the sensible matter of the cross, whilst our mind and heart are fixed on Jesus Christ?

Oh! if the Reformers had been desirous of correcting and reforming the real faults of Catholics, why did they not say to them on this matter: "Are you not ashamed to call yourselves disciples of Jesus Christ, and with so much levity to abuse his cross? How comes that precipitation with which you multiply the signs of it upon yourselves? How comes it that the priests at the altar during the most august action of their ministry make it, if they can be said to make it at all, with a most indecent and scandalous rapidity? In such hasty and ill formed crosses, in such unmeaning and quickly repeated movements of the hand, how are we to discover either intention or form or figure? People know not, scarcely can you yourselves know, what you are about. You surely cannot know the sacred sign that you profane: you cannot know that it comprises an abridged profession of your faith, the trinity of persons in one God, the incarnation, the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, your redemption and that of the whole world. Is not this sufficient to make you enter into yourselves, to make you more deliberate in your motions, to inspire you with greater recollection, and caution you to proceed to the forming of this venerable sign with becoming decorum and gravity?" Such are the reproaches they should have addressed to Catholics; reproaches, which unfortunately are, even to this day, too well merited.

Catholics, feeling themselves guilty, must have replied by acknowledging their fault. But to forbid this profession of faith, to abolish a practice as ancient as the Church; to forbid Christians to employ the sign which announces Christianity, the sign that fortifies us against temptations and dangers, which is the support of the sick man at the approach of death, of the martyr at the sight of the sword or the faggot; to condemn to the flames the crucifix, the image of our Saviour expiring upon the cross for us; to pull down the cross, the trophy that forms our glory, and our hope,¹ the cross which saved the world, the cross which will judge it when it shall appear more resplendent than the sun; what an inconceivable blindness! what a delirium! Is it possible that Christians should ever have so far outraged the principles of reason and common sense, and the feelings of nature, as to think and to act in a manner which to this day excites our astonishment and consternation!

¹ "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ep. to Galat. vi. 14.

LETTER XVIII.

Conclusion.

BEING arrived at the term we had proposed, permit me, Sir, to detain you one moment longer. Let us, before we separate, take a retrospective view of the ground over which we have just passed. The Reformation, you see, made its *debut* into the world by rising up against what is called the abuses of the Church of Rome, against customs and dogmas unknown, it said, to Christian antiquity. It gave out that it was going to restore religion to its original purity, by removing what man had added, and closely adhering to the simplicity of the faith and worship which had been preached by the apostles and preserved during the illustrious ages of the Church. It gave to these ages the appellation of the golden age of Christianity, and understood by it the period comprised between the time of the apostles and the fourth general council inclusively, a period during which it acknowledged that faith and worship had been preserved in their purity, during which the greatest lights of the Church had appeared, and Jesus Christ had almost as many martyrs and saints as teachers and bishops. But in order to attain the noble and desirable end that it announced, the Reformation would hear no more of the authority of the Church, but complained bitterly that this authority had occasioned the pernicious additions: thenceforth it would refer and appeal to what it should find written in the sacred books, being fully persuaded that the primitive Church exclusively attached herself to them; and that what is not found in the Scriptures had been added to its belief and practice in the ages of ignorance and corruption. Such were the language and principles of the Reformation.

And what has been the result? Under the pretext of lopping off the additions which it laid to the charge of our ancestors, it

retrenched precisely that which was believed and practiced by that primitive Church, to which it professed to conduct us. Of this you have seen certain and multiplied proofs in the lengthened dissertations, which I have entered into on your account. In fact, both the Calvinistic reformation and yours pulled down the cross, wherever power enabled them to do it, both reformations forbade Christians to impress the sign of it on their foreheads: and you have seen this sign much more in use among the first Christians than among us: you have seen the cross set up in those times, not only in the temples, in houses, and on the walls, but also upon the imperial diadem of Constantine. The Calvinistic reformation blushed not to pronounce as a prevarication, and even as idolatry, the honor paid to images by placing them in our temples; and you have seen them in the first Christian temples affixed even to the sacred vessels in the apostolic times. The Reformation treated our respect for the relics of the saints as superstition; it dispersed their bones and dust as objects of vile idolatry: and you have seen the most ancient Christians devoutly collecting the remains of their martyrs, visiting their tombs, and celebrating their memory; you have seen the first altars solemnly raised over their relics.

The Reformation declared that to invoke the saints was creating so many mediators, substituting them in the places of the demigods of old, and reviving a portion of paganism in the Christian worship; and you have heard antiquity invoke them, and the noblest geniuses of the golden age request their favorable intercession. The Reformation agreed in asserting that it was useless to pray for the dead, that it was a fond thing vainly invented; that purgatory was a fiction created from interest in corrupt times: and you have heard the Fathers of the most illustrious ages speaking of a middle place, where souls are *purged* from their lesser stains; you have heard Christians of all communions, at the commencement of the fifth century, recite for the dead, in the liturgy, most fervent prayers, the origin of which can no where be found but in the doctrine of the apostles. The Reformation, as you must have observed by condemning all

prayers for the dead, and all invocation addressed to the blessed, distressingly separated the two worlds from each other, and in its profound conceptions, limited the communion of saints to the earthly and transient connexions between cotemporary individuals: whereas the pure and primitive Church by giving to the dead its prayers, and by requesting the prayers of the blessed, produced a reciprocal communication between the two worlds, a pious and affectionate understanding, and thus nourished feeling and life in all the members of the mystical body of Jesus Christ, that is, in all true believers that has existed or that will exist from the creation till the consummation of the world.

The Reformation furiously assailed indulgences, and, taking the abuse for the thing itself, could find no other origin for them than a sordid avidity for lucre; and you have discovered their true source in St. Paul himself, you have followed them in their course from age to age, and discovered the traces of them in the rigors of the canonical penances. The Reformation freed the people at once from all expiatory works, by persuading them that the infinite satisfactions of Jesus Christ dispensed them from making any personal satisfaction: and you have seen the holy bishops of the first ages subjecting sinners to long austerities, expressly obliging them to satisfy the divine justice for the offences they had committed. The reformation authorized the people to shake off the yoke of confession, some pretending that it was not necessary for obtaining from God the remission of our sins; others, that it was a pure invention of the Popes to torture men's consciences; and you have seen the greatest doctors of the Church insist upon the necessity of our making a most exact confession of our sins to the priests, in order to obtain the pardon of them from God, and you have learned that, in the ancient discipline, confession made in public always supposed a previous confession made to the priests in private.

The Reformation split upon the great article of the Eucharist, Luther retaining the real presence, Zuinglius and Calvin rejecting it together with the change of substance, the altar, the sacrifice and the adoration: and you have seen the primitive

Church, in opposition to both, instructing the neophytes to believe all the mysteries, notwithstanding their height or opposition to human sense; you have seen all the liturgies of the world draw them out in most striking characters, and this agreement of opposite communions in the fifth century, demonstrate the common and apostolical source of this belief; you have moreover recognized it in the secret which the faithful so inviolably kept, a secret completely unintelligible and inexplicable on the ideas of the reformation, and which could only be employed to conceal our mysteries.

The reformation, proceeding at first with wary and timorous step, seemed only to be waiting for the decision of the Church to submit to it; but afterwards, assuming an attitude of stern defiance, it would submit to no superior tribunal; it aimed the blow against all authority; and you have seen antiquity have recourse to this authority, and invoke its assistance against rising errors; you have seen the Church, at first in its state of dispersion, unavoidable from circumstances, and then in the general councils, exercise that supreme authority, and fulminate its decrees against heresies. The Reformation, unsettled in its principles, appeared sometimes to admit unwritten traditions, but more frequently declared that it knew no other rule of faith but the Scripture: and you have seen all antiquity form its belief upon the double deposit of Revelation,—Scripture and Tradition. The Reformation boasted of holding in its hand the key of the Scriptures, of being able to communicate it to every individual, and of granting to each one the right, which it arrogated to itself, to understand and explain the holy books, according to his own private judgment: and you have seen all antiquity oppose to this principle of disunion and discord the voice of the universal Church, and regard those as excommunicated who, persisting in their own private explanations, obstinately refused to submit their opinions to the general doctrine of the bishops.

The Reformation feared not to break the bonds of unity, and to advance diverse pretexts to justify its separation, even so far as to pretend that it found this separation absolutely indispensa-

ble: and you have heard the greatest doctors of the primitive Church uniformly teach that there never could exist any legitimate reason for breaking unity; that schism is a crime most opposed to the spirit and the end of Revelation, and of all sins the most fatal and unpardonable. In fine, the Reformation shews us amongst its propagators, here religious men and priests without mission, there civil magistrates, assemblies of laics without a shadow of competency in spirituals, trenching upon discipline and doctrine, each fashioning the Church to his taste, all in open revolt against those, to whom it was said: "He that despiseth you, despiseth me;" and you have seen Christian antiquity, faithful to the institution of Jesus Christ, exclusively recognize the spiritual authority of the apostles and their successors; you have seen the first Christian emperors await their decisions, set the example of submission, and require the same submission from their subjects.

It is therefore true, Sir, that in pretending to bring you back to the primitive faith, the Reformation has precisely led you astray from it; it is therefore true that in all its objections against us, there is not one in which you do not discover it at variance with antiquity. The fact is certain, and it was perceived by a great number of your able divines, so much so, that their individual testimonies would suffice to establish each of the articles which we have examined. Here call Middleton to your recollection, who so distinctly read in the first ages all the articles, which your Reformation retrenched, that he found no other means of supporting it, than that of effacing at a single stroke all the documents of the Fathers, and of paying no regard whatever to their traditions and testimonies.¹

But you will say to me, how is this? The leaders of Reformation and our reforming bishops pass generally amongst us as having been men of superior minds, and eminent in ecclesiastical knowledge: and you have just represented them to me as

¹ Middleton was correct when he judged that the Reformation and the primitive Church were incompatible, and that it was impossible to be attached to both. His folly and peculiar taste led him to give the preference to the Reformation.

persons buried in ignorance! According to you, they could have had no knowledge of the doctrine which they wished to introduce into the world. In truth, Sir, this cannot be conceived.

I see you are much struck, Sir; it is what I was expecting. You will perhaps be still more astonished, when I tell you that I am not at all surprised at it. I can explain very naturally the mistakes and errors of fact in which they have fallen. It must not be thought that in their time men possessed, respecting antiquity, those exact notions which we have since acquired. The invention of printing is dated about sixty years before the Reformation. The greater part of the monuments of the Church and the works of the Fathers had not then been brought to light. The libraries were not what they have since become; they contained little more than manuscripts often incorrect, always extremely difficult to decipher. The oriental liturgies, those precious and instructive monuments were totally unknown, and continued to be so till a century later. Thus be your reformers as well-informed as you please for the age in which they lived, their unavoidably limited knowledge necessarily prevented them from making a correct and extensive acquaintance with Christian antiquity: this was not so much their fault as that of the age in which they lived.¹

But by degrees the works of the Fathers and the records of

¹ We know moreover that to acquire amongst the people more credit than their adversaries, the Reformers generally applied themselves to the study of the Greek and Hebrew languages, which were then much neglected, and published from the originals numerous translations of the Old and New Testaments. Calvin, for example, had scarcely completed the study of the belles lettres, law, and the languages, when at the age of thirty he published his Institutions, and thus began to dogmatize before he had made any serious study of theology. Luther, at first educated for the bar, afterwards terrified by the thunderbolt which struck his friend dead at his side, renounces the world and its concerns, takes refuge in a cloister, (what a commencement for such an end, O Providence!) seriously applies himself to theology, gives lessons of the same, and preaches with celebrity. He employed much of his time in reading St. Augustin, and undoubtedly was no stranger to some of the other Fathers. But the difficulty of the circumstances, and the rarity of printed works permitted him to possess but a very imperfect knowledge of antiquity, when at the age of thirty-two he began to broach his opinions, and talk of reforming the world.

ecclesiastical history, which till then had been preserved in manuscript, were put to press and brought to light. Men of indefatigable industry, guided by the rules of sound and judicious criticism, produced afterwards other editions more correct: these editions multiplied, and were in the hands and under the eyes of the teachers of every existing party. Each sought in them for the dogmas of their respective communions; emulation animated their investigation, and produced from every side treatises replete with ecclesiastical knowledge, and nobly adorned with antiquity. In France, among the Catholics appeared two eminent theologians, living almost during the time of the Reformation, the Cardinal du Perron, and Père Morin: Père Petau, still more learned, followed immediately after them; his age, which was the golden age of France, enriched the Gallican Church which a Vansleb, a Renaudot, a Le Brun, who brought to light the oriental liturgies; two celebrated friends, Arnauld and Nicole, who admirably digested whatever had been believed and taught from the origin of Christianity, on the great controverted points; and that incomparable genius, whom heaven endowed with a talent of fixing public opinion upon the numerous subjects which he treated, and also of attaining to the summit of Christian eloquence. On the side of the Calvinists, Aubertin, Daillé, and Claude have also produced much extensive information respecting the Fathers. Spain has had her learned controversialists; Italy its Bellarmine; Germany its Wallemburg, &c. for Catholics, and its Kemnitius, its Callixtus, &c. for protestants; and your country, Sir, (for assuredly I will not be the person to refuse to England the glory of having produced most distinguished men in every branch of literature and the sciences), may boast of having had, among others, Doctors Forbes, Montague, Pearson, Bull, Thorndike, Heylin, Collyer, Samuel Parker, Beveridge, Cave, Grabe, &c. for whom Christian antiquity, if I may be allowed the expression, had no secrets. All these men of talent and profound knowledge emulously labored in investigating the voluminous writings of the first ages; the Catholics, to vindicate before the world the apostolicity of the dogmas, of

which they themselves were previously well convinced from the uniform, and perpetual doctrine of the Church; the Protestants, on the contrary, to oppose testimonies to testimonies, to weaken the strength of our citations, to take away, as much as possible, from our dogmas their apostolical date, and substitute a more recent one in their place, and by this means to maintain the honor of the party in which they found themselves engaged; although nevertheless many of our adversaries, especially among your countrymen, for their honor I say it, have made no difficulty in acknowledging, sometimes upon one question, sometimes upon another, and, uniting them together, nearly upon all, that the primitive Church had taught what we teach. Whatever may be thought of so much indefatigable research and so many contradictory discussions, the facts have acquired all the certainty of which they are capable; upon each of the articles, which divide us, every thing has been brought forward from known and existing records; every thing for and against has been collected from the writings of the Fathers. There are no new discoveries to be made, no new research to be pursued. Every thing has been brought to light; so that, at the present day, nothing more is wanting for our instruction and conviction, than a little application, and great sincerity.

These true and purely historical observations ought to convince you now, Sir, that the primitive Church could have been but very imperfectly known at the epoch, when the Reformation undertook to lead us back to her: they should give you to understand that whilst the Reformation boasted of dissipating ignorance, it was itself involved in darkness. It is not to be wondered that, boldly rushing forward in the dark, it should leave the path, and having left the path, should go so egregiously astray. It decided, without hesitation, questions with which it imagined itself acquainted, and peremptorily pronounced its opinions with the confident assurance of those, who believe themselves sure of their fact, precisely because they know nothing about it. Its proceeding was therefore necessarily defective, and its work was incorrectly sketched. It is true that by dispu-

tation it sharpened the mind, provoked labor, induced ecclesiastical knowledge, and accelerated the progress of light; this I grant; but you must also grant that this very light is the death-blow of the Reformation. The splendor, which it casts around, has clearly exposed the falsity of its allegations, and has demonstrated that the Reformation never began a controversy of any importance against us, in which the error was not upon its side.

But what appears to me something strange is, that men, so well informed as many are, and as all may be in these days, should remain attached to the opinions of those who neither were, nor could be so informed; that men of penetration should permit themselves to be guided by the blind, whose very efforts to leave their darkness prove at every step how deeply they were involved in it; what again appears strange is, that an age, to which all the sources of knowledge are thrown open, should continue to be led by an age during which nearly all these sources were closed. Who would now-a-days choose to defend the thirty-nine articles, drawn up by men who, without any right to meddle in such matters, heaped, as they did, one error upon another?¹ They rose in open schism against their legitimate bishops and the universal Church, and seemed not to be aware that of all crimes schism is the most enormous and the most opposed to the views of Christ and the end of his revelation. They denied the authority of the Church, because they had revolted against her, and knew not that they could never prevail against her, because

¹ Dr. Balguy declares that "Some of them are expressed in *doubtful terms*; others are *inaccurate*, perhaps *unphilosophical*; others again may chance to *mislead* an ignorant reader into some *erroneous opinion*." English discourses (as quoted by Dr. Milner, Letters to a Prebendary, Letter VIII. p. 414, 6th edition.)

"The articles of our established Church, observes Mason Good, are variously interpreted by many, even of those who sit upon the episcopal bench; and according to our modern controversies, we scarcely know whether they were built upon an Arminian or Calvinistic foundation."

"One may conceive, says Sterne, that all these articles may be believed, by supposing that one person believes one of them, and another another, and so on; but I do not imagine that there has ever been any one so weak as to believe them all."

"The forms of orthodoxy, the articles of faith, are subscribed with a sigh or a smile by the modern Clergy." Gibbon's Decline and Fall, C. LIV. at the end.

she is established upon the word and promises of her divine founder. They taught that every thing essential was contained in the Scripture, and did not see that they directly contradicted the Scripture, which commands them to believe also the unwritten word. They treated whatever we practice and teach respecting indulgences, purgatory, the invocation of saints, respect paid to relics and images, as fond things vainly invented, and repugnant to the word of God; and did not see these various articles in the doctrine of the apostles, and were not aware that by following this doctrine we conform to the primitive Church, and to the unwritten word, which is equally the word of God. They passed over Confession in silence, and had no suspicion of its necessity; of which however you have seen evident proofs. They quibbled upon the real presence, and openly rejected Transubstantiation, like persons who understood not the Scriptures, and were ignorant of the Liturgies, the Apostolic institutions, and the real doctrine of antiquity.¹

If they could only have been better acquainted with what the

¹ What again would be the result, if I had exposed the errors which they taught respecting the number of the sacred books and of the Sacraments, communion under both kinds, reserving the consecrated host, canonical mission, which they acknowledge to be necessary, but which they themselves had not received; the effects of excommunication which they admit, but which they did not regard in their own case: the unlimited power in *all* ecclesiastical causes yielded to the temporal Sovereign, and at the same time every kind of jurisdiction withdrawn from the successor of Peter, &c. And again, on the right claimed by each Church to reform itself: even so far as to form a schism from the universal Church! But supposing each Church to possess the right of reforming itself, it has consequently the right also of rejecting a reformation which it disapproves of; and this is what the English Church did in 1558, by its bishops and by the two chambers of the convocation, whom the intruders of 1562 could never have had the right to contradict and oppose.

“If in these ages of more experience and learning they (the Anglicans and the Reformed) would submit to call the decrees of the more ignorant times to an examination, I dare engage that considering what vast improvements have been made in all the several branches of learning, and particularly in theology, they will think otherwise of these matters than their ignorant predecessors did before them, especially if they lay aside those prejudices that are rather contracted by custom than judgment.” *Dodwell's Discourse concerning the late English Schism*—London, 1704, p. 257.—I flatter myself that Dodwell would not, at the present day, be displeased at the application which I make of his words.

Fathers have left us; could they have had before their eyes the monuments which we now possess in print, and the collections and the learned dissertations to which their mistakes gave rise; they would have adopted other principles, and have established quite a different doctrine: this cannot be doubted, unless we refuse to believe their assertions, and suppose them to have been guided by interested motives and not by sincerity.

For evidently at the time in which we live, we must shut our eyes to the light, or turn them away from their thirty nine articles. We must renounce our knowledge, of their labor; we must give up all that we have learned and read, or what they have done or said. Let us sigh over the faults and the errors, into which they fell, in consequence of the unfortunate ignorance of their age; but let us no longer share in them and prolong them. It is assuredly time to be emancipated from them; it is time to take all necessary measures to put an end to a separation introduced under auspices so unfavorable and deceitful.¹

The attempts so often made by Protestants to become united among themselves have, up to this time, proved nothing more than the conviction they felt of the necessity of union, and of the irresistible motives which establish the obligation of it. They have always failed in their attempt, and have never been likely

¹ It belongs not to me to point out these measures. But instruction being once disseminated, and the minds of men prepared, I should conceive that the re-union would not be so difficult an affair to accomplish. If they would adhere strictly to the dogmas defined according to the judicious rules of Veron, it would suffice: nothing more need be required. In return, our principles permit us to make the greatest concessions in points of discipline, such as communion under both kinds, the marriage of ecclesiastics, divine service in the vulgar tongue, all the ceremonies, the vestments, the ornaments of the priests, of the altars, and of the churches; in a word, every point of discipline, which the Church should judge expedient to change. And as faith dwells in the intellectual part of man, the change would be almost imperceptible. The public worship would remain to the eye nearly what it is at present. This applies still better to the Greek Church.

“We ought to shew great charity to heretics, and from condescension to their weakness and a love for peace, yield to them whatever does not affect either morality or faith. Discipline being subject to variation, there cannot exist a greater necessity for changing it in certain points, than when the object is to recall to the bosom of unity an innumerable multitude now separated from it.” See *Œuvres de Ganganeli*, Tom. IV. p. 91.

to attain it, because they have never taken the only way which could conduct them to it, and which however had been traced out to them by eminent individuals of their communions. They must permit me here to call their attention to the opinion of two personages, whose candor, strength of mind, and superiority of judgment and learning, they will not call in question. "Grotius is absolutely of this judgment, and many others concur with him in the same sentiment, that Protestants cannot be united among themselves, except they are united together with those who are in communion with the see of Rome. Hence it is his wish that the separation which has been made, and the causes of separation, were taken away. Amongst these causes, the primacy of the bishop of Rome, according to the canons, is not to be reckoned; as Melancthon likewise confesses; who is of opinion that that primacy is even necessary for the preserving of unity."¹

"When once it is agreed in the Church of England, that salvation may be and always might have been attained in the Church of Rome, it is beyond a doubt to me that no Church could separate from the Roman Church without constituting itself, necessarily, by that fact alone, schismatical before God."²

"It is from attachment to the Reformation that I insist upon a principle, which may serve to re-unite us to the Church of Rome, being fully convinced that without this we shall never be well united among ourselves, and that not our reformation only, but even the Christianity which we profess in common, will be destroyed by our divisions, which never will end but by a re-union with Rome."²

Never did any period promise, so favorable as the present, the hope of a universal return to unity. The length of time, which has elapsed since the destruction of unity, has cooled the heads of men formerly heated by violent animosities. Let us only endeavor, now that we are become calm, not to become indifferent. Let us surrender ourselves to the truth, which is manifested to our eyes. To reject it is a crime without excuse and without

¹ Grotius, close of last *Reply to Rivet. Apol. Discuss.* ² Thorndike, on *Forbearance*, p. 19. ³ Idem. *Ib.* p. 32

remedy; to embrace it, a duty and a happiness. Need I repeat it to a people who love truth, to a people perhaps better formed for feeling it than any other, and who would already have recognized it, if prejudices, which always darken the mind, had not hitherto prevented them from discovering it. These prejudices conceived against us and our belief, appear now to be partially dissipated. The English¹ have beheld landing upon their shores an immense multitude of Catholic priests, whom Providence in its merciful views for the salvation both of the proscribed and the protectors, had cast upon their hospitable island. The marks of compassion and generosity, which they have shewn to our unfortunate clergy, lead me to conclude that they have not found them such as they had previously supposed them to be. By communicating with them, in order to alleviate their misery, they have discovered virtues, which gained their esteem. Of them and their religious principles they have formed a less unfavorable opinion; instruction would easily accomplish the rest. Perhaps also Providence, in its adorable designs, has permitted in our days the temporal degradation of the head of our Church, and has given him in his forlorn condition such heroic constancy, for no other purpose than to inspire into those, who had become strangers to him, a high esteem of his dignity, and to cause them to forget the apprehensions they had formerly conceived in his regard; perhaps again, it may be the design of Heaven one day to accept their support for replacing the successor of Peter in his See, in order to lead them more sweetly to a total reconciliation with him, by the kind feeling which is created in us towards those whom we have had the advantage of serving and obliging.

If I look at the two Houses of Parliament, I discover in the first the most illustrious personages in the state, and, in both, men of distinguished merit and learning, whose votes are publicly applied to every thing that is good and just, and consequently truly useful; and whose learned debates are quickly

¹ This applies almost as much to the inhabitants of Holland, the various states of Germany, Switzerland, Saxony, Brandebourg, &c.

spread through the nation, conveying instruction and light to the extremities of the empire. I will suppose that one of the members should think proper to introduce the following question. "Did Jesus Christ confide the administration of his Church, and the deposit of his doctrine to Parliament? Did he invest Parliament with a right to pronounce upon faith, heresies, ordination, mission and the deposition of bishops? Did he give this spiritual jurisdiction, with the power of delegating the same to the supreme ruler of the state? I am convinced that he would excite a universal laugh in the House, and would receive no other reply. The limits of each authority are now-a-days too well defined to be confounded; and the Parliament which is all powerful in the temporal and social order of things, is well aware that it has never received from Christ any spiritual power whatever. It knows that it is not to itself that our Saviour said:

"Go, teach all nations; I am with you to the consummation of the world. He that hears you, hears me: he that despises you despises me: as my Father has sent me, I also send you; feed my lambs, feed my sheep: there shall be but one fold and one shepherd, &c."¹ And yet the Parliament of 1558 was ignorant of these simple truths, or at least acted as if it was. It seized upon the jurisdiction given by Jesus Christ to his apostles and their successors and placed it on the crown. Elizabeth seemed to believe herself sufficiently invested with it; for she put into full action the power that they had given her, which was precisely the same as her brother and father had exercised before her.² This usurpation of spiritual authority, and the transfer

¹The dominant faction which, in 1790, was bent upon giving to France what it called a civil constitution, was composed, as is well known, of avowed infidels, of abandoned wretches, of seducing fanatics, and a seduced and weak-minded multitude. It had assumed the most absolute authority, but it never dared to usurp the spiritual jurisdiction: it protested that it never had pretended to exercise such jurisdiction, and even declared, as a principle, that it had no claim whatever to it. It knew well that it would have been impossible to instil the contrary principle into an enlightened nation, which had read so attentively the works of Marca and Bossuet.

²See the Admonition, which Elizabeth added to her injunctions, the first year of her reign, and the Act of Parliament, "for the assurance of the Queen's royal power over all estates and subjects within her dominions." Act 5. Eliz. c. I.

made of it to the crown, are both alike repugnant to the order and disposition of Jesus Christ. Consequently whatever was done under Elizabeth was done without right, or the least shadow of competency: every thing is radically null in the principle, and will continue to be null so long as it shall exist. These truths are as clear to the mind as the noon-day light is to our eyes. I would say therefore to the actual parliament, if I had the honor of belonging to that most ancient and enlightened and upright body, to that body which no Englishman reveres and honors more than I do myself; I would say to it that it is its indispensable duty to abolish the infamous encroachment of 1558; for on the principle of morality and equity, to maintain and perpetuate an establishment acknowledged to be anti-christian, when it can be suppressed, is not less deserving of condemnation, than the having first set it on foot.

If I looked at the *Established Church*,¹ I find that she carries in her bosom the principle of her destruction, in that liberty of making a religious and form of worship for themselves, which she cannot now deny to any, after claiming it for herself; perhaps she would already have sunk, if Parliament, which created her, had not transferred to her that protection, which hitherto had been given to the religion that was now suppressed; I mean to say, if, when Parliament banished the ancient Church from the constitution, it had not called the new religion to occupy its place. But be this protection as powerful as it may, it cannot destroy that radical evil, which invisibly saps its foundation.

¹ I have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with many members of both orders of its clergy, and I must say that I have found the greater part to be men commendable for the propriety of their conduct, the gravity of their deportment, the order and economy of their families, for their cultivated minds, their taste for study and information, but too generally in natural sciences, mathematics, chemistry, botany, mineralogy, &c.

It is well that the Clergy possesses men who excel separately in the human sciences, but the great, nay far the greater number, ought to apply themselves to the Holy Scripture, to the monuments of ecclesiastical history, to theology, in fine, which is almost abandoned in England. I have remarked with sorrow that in the excellent libraries at Cambridge and Oxford, the superb editions of the Fathers and the councils are thickly covered with disgraceful dust.

From its origin the Reformation has beheld its children deserting it by little and little, passing over sometimes to one society, sometimes to another, while thus rival sects increase in numbers by its losses. How many has it not to regret from the numerous conquests that are unceasingly made by the Methodist alone? These had already, in my time, acquired considerable accessions: in London I observed crowds of people flocking to their chapels, and obstructing the streets on their return. The like concourse accompanied them in the country towns; I also beheld them propagate themselves in country places, and detach from the parishes a great proportion of the inhabitants. If what I have heard since my departure from England be true, we may already nearly calculate the precise, and not far distant period, when the established bishops and clergy will find themselves in solitude, in the midst of their spacious Churches. What stop can they put to the progress of that invading sect? Will not the Methodists perpetually say that they make just use of the liberty, which the Reformation grants to its followers, and without which the Reformation itself would no where have gained a footing—the liberty of working out one's salvation and serving God according to one's own idea? But the remedy will, I trust, be found even in the very excess of evil. The established Church must begin to be convinced, and will daily become more convinced, by the most sensible of all proofs—experience—that the whole Reformation turns upon a principle of divisions, intestine discords, and death; that it is impossible to hold men together in unity and order, when once the career is thrown open to their natural and unrestrained impetuosity. It will at last feel that it can escape ruin and dissolution only by retracing its steps, by returning to the point from which it started, by acknowledging and itself sharing that supreme and salutary authority, which alone is able to unite men in one body, and which with this view was actually given by Jesus Christ to his Church, that she might maintain harmony and unity from one extremity of the world to the other.

In fine, if I consider the British Empire, I discover a people, the different classes of which are better informed than those of

other countries; the individuals of which, being generally in the habit of discussion and business, and obliged to calculate and reflect, must necessarily be less obstinate in their prejudices, more susceptible of truth, and more open to conviction. Let a nation of this solid character reflect impartially on the effects of the Reformation in its own and in foreign countries, and it will discover that in religion its retrenchments, far from being advantageous, as men had persuaded themselves, are but imaginary goods, and real evils, and not unfrequently, essential alterations in revealed doctrine, as I have proved; and that in politics it has inundated the world with a deluge of calamities.¹ Most assuredly I take no delight in exaggerating its real faults, or inventing imaginary ones; but is it not true, that if it had never appeared, Ireland would not have been the most miserable of all nations under heaven, and would not have tasted, during more than two hundred years, all the horrors of war and civil oppressions, which originate in the rage for compelling the multitude to receive and adopt, contrary to their principles and conscience, a new religion, which itself came into the world proclaiming to all people the liberty of serving God according to their own ideas? Is it not true, that Scotland would not have been thrown into anarchy and all in flames by the preaching of a Knox, and a Willock, by their infamous declamations and writings, and by those of Buchanan, by their deeply plotted revolts, and the enormous calumnies of Murray, Morton, Lethington, &c.; that the beautiful and unfortunate Mary Stuart would not have been compelled to fly before her rebellious subjects, to implore an asylum with her royal relative, who received her as a rival, and after eighteen years of captivity, to lay down her innocent and royal head, under the hatchet of the executioner?² Is it not true,

¹ "Calvini discipuli, ubicumque invaluerunt, imperia turbavere." Grotius, *In animad.* Rivet. Tom. IV. p. 649.

"Calvinism necessarily produced civil wars, and shook the foundation of states. There is no country, in which the religions of Luther and Calvin have appeared, without making blood to flow." Voltaire, *Siecle de Louis XIV.* c. XXXIII.

² See Whitaker, Tytler, Stuart: and not Hume, Roberston, &c., who have been convicted of gross errors respecting the unfortunate Mary. See also *Les Me-*

that in England, Mary would not have enkindled the pile, Elizabeth would not have prepared her tortures and gibbets and converted the Catholic worship into a capital crime; Charles the First would not have beheld himself, after a rebellion of six years continuance imprisoned, judged, and dragged by his subjects to the scaffold; James the Second would not have been constrained, in order to avoid the fate of his father, to abandon his kingdom and his crown; both of them being sovereigns in a country, where the ministers alone are responsible, and where the person of kings is inviolable, and his majesty can do no wrong? Is it not true, that Germany would never have beheld its numerous states, rising one against the other with destructive rage, during an implacable war of thirty years continuance? That the Low Countries and Holland would not have been the theatres of battles and executions? Is it not true, that France would not have witnessed either its perpetual conspiracies and intestine and cruel wars, or the shame of that terrible night of St. Bartholomew, or the frenzy of the league, or, after the effusion of so much blood, that dark and dismal fermentation of opposite parties, which was long repressed, though never extinguished, and at last burst forth in a revolution far surpassing, in wicked-

moires de Castelnau, edition of Abbe Le Laboureur. *L' Histoire de la rivalite de la France et de l'Angleterre*, par M. Gaillard.

Let us hear a well informed English writer, who lived and wrote soon after those terrible times: "In the mean time the common infamy prevailed, and none is made more guilty of it than this wretched Queen, who had been drawn to give consent to her marriage with *Bothwel*, by the solicitation and avarice of these very men, who afterwards condemned her for it. In order to whose ends, *Buchanan* publishes a most pestilent and malicious libel, which he called *The Defection*, wherein he publicly traduced her for living an adulterous life with *David Risio*, and afterwards with *Bothwel* himself; that to precipitate her unlawful marriage, she had contrived the death of the king her husband, projected a divorce between *Bothwel* and his former wife, contrary to the laws both of God and man. Which libel being printed and dispersed abroad, obtained so much credit with most sorts of people, that few made question of the truth of the accusations. Most true it is, that *Buchanan* is reported by king James himself to have confessed with great grief at the time of his death, how falsely and injuriously he had dealt with her in that scandalous pamphlet; but this confession came too late, and was known to few, and therefore proved too weak a remedy for the former mischief." Heylin's *Hist. of Presbyterians*, Book V. p. 194—Oxford, 1670.

ness and barbarity, any thing we have ever read of in the annals of the world? For, however far removed the Reformation may be from that last bloody epoch, of which we have just been witnesses, he who watches and traces the progress of opinions, will discover between them a more direct and immediate connexion than might at first be imagined. In fact, reflect that, after having brought to light the Anabaptists in Germany, the Puritans and Independents in your country, the Socinians in Switzerland, Hungary and Poland, it required but a trifling effort to give birth to deists and infidels, and to multiply them, for the curse of France and the world. Take up Heylin's History of the Presbyterians, and you will see there¹ that they were the inventors and first apologists of the principles, which our revolutionists first laid down as fundamental laws, and from which they afterwards proceeded to legalize robbery, proscriptions, assassinations, anarchy, to swell the number of their accomplices, and to distri-

¹ Among others, at p. 27, he cites this maxim of the English Puritans, disciples of Calvin, that "if the princes hinder them that travail in the search of this holy discipline, (this holy liberty) they are tyrants to the Church and the ministers of it (to the nation;) and being so, may be deposed by their subjects." *Idem*, at p. 68, on the assassination of the Duke of Guise by Poltrot. At p. 141, on the assassination of Cardinal Beton, he says that Knox, in the first edition of his history, calls the stabs, which James Melvin gave him with a dagger, and the words with which he accompanied them, *a godly action and saying*. At p. 153, he relates that, in the opinions of Willock, Kings, although the lieutenants of God upon earth, are still liable to be deposed for just causes. At p. 285, he mentions some of their seditious maxims: for example, *if princes do hinder them that seek for this discipline (liberty,) they are tyrants and may be deposed by their subjects*. At p. 447, he tells us that, during the Rebellion, "It was also preached and printed by the Presbyterians to the same effect (as Buchanan, and Knox, Calvin and some other of the sect had before delivered) *That all power was originally in the people of a state or nation; in kings no otherwise than by delegation, or by way of trust; which trust might be recalled when the people pleased;.... that kings being only the sworn officers of the commonwealth, they might be called to an account, and punished in case of mal-administration, even to imprisonment, deposition, and to death itself, if lawfully convicted of it.*" Our Revolutionists, therefore, were only pupils, copyists, and echoes of the Reformation and the reformed. "Good God! what a tragedy are we preparing for posterity!" exclaimed Melancton, struck with terror at the unbridled licentiousness, which the Reformation introduced amongst its admirers. O that the last act of this long and bloody tragedy may at length be closed. I

bute the nation into victims and executioners. In fine if you imagine that I have unjustly charged the Reformation with that long and bloody series of crimes and calamities, cast your eyes upon those people which have had the happiness to prevent its entrance among them. When once we find that interior peace is maintained, where admittance has not been given to it, and when, on the contrary, flames of civil discord have raged where ever it has entered, it must stand clearly convicted of the charges imputed to it: and because it has evidently been every where the first aggressor, it is natural to ascribe to it, in great measure, not only to the horrors perpetrated by its own adherents, but those also which it occasioned its adversaries to commit. For no one can deny that it is the accomplice of the crimes which it has provoked, and which, without such provocation, would never have taken place.¹

¹The Reformation was repelled from Portugal and Spain by the tribunals of the inquisition, which had been previously erected against the followers of Mahomet. I do not undertake to justify these tribunals in theory and on principle; I merely look at the effects produced by them in the Peninsula. They are accused (and would to God there was less reason for the charge!) of having carried rigor to injustice and cruelty. Why did they not imitate those of Italy? Without defiling themselves with innocent blood, they would have obtained all that success, which the sovereigns expected from their vigilance. But would it be reasonable to confound the abuse with the thing itself, and to impute to the inquisition, crimes of which its officers only were guilty? It is generally agreed now-a-days that the number of innocent victims has been greatly exaggerated. Had not this been the case, Spain, while she reproached herself with all these cruel and unjust executions, would not have to regret the lot of other states, where religious wars, have shed a deluge of human blood, destroyed thousands of men, covered the land with mourning, tears, misery, desolation, sacrilege and every crime that the devils could inspire into unnatural fellow-citizens, and brethren infuriated against each other.

Who does not see that without its religious unity, Spain (and the same must be said of Portugal) would have sunk in our days, itself concurring to effect its ruin with the hostile armies, which, after having so long preyed upon its bosom, have been rejected by the heroic and united efforts of the whole nation and its magnanimous allies!—"Although this detestable institution (the inquisition) should hold a part of the people in ignorance, an extenuation will be found for its tyranny in its having been serviceable in preserving them from the contagion of the moral principles, which have inundated and defiled other parts of Europe." *La Crise d'Espagne*, tran. by Compte de Sesmaisons, 1823, from the original work in English.

It appears to me that these observations upon the political effects of the Reformation in Europe must necessarily inspire every impartial man with aversion to it; that they must weaken in its followers that attachment and interest, which the prejudices of education alone have inspired; that they must eventually produce in them a feeling of estrangement in its regard, and make them desirous that it should be entirely abandoned. What then must we think and feel, if, to these considerations purely terrestrial, are added religious motives—schism, and its total incompatibility with salvation according to the acknowledgment of all parties—the Eucharist reduced to a mere pious ceremony, and Jesus Christ banished from his sacrament—a whole life without one valid absolution—and confession, essential for the pardon of sins, totally put aside? I have produced and developed decisive proofs on these points: there is no longer room for deliberation. I say then to the Established Church, and to the numerous sects which divide with her the British Empire; I say also to the body of Lutheranism, as well as to the Calvinistic societies; to all those, in fine, of every communion, who may peruse these pages, whatever be their country, or profession of faith: “You must either renounce schism or salvation.”

Were this language merely my own, it would doubtless excite no alarm. But it is the language of my Saviour, that of his Apostles and all their Successors, who, according to the order of their Divine Master, have always regarded rebels to the Church as heathens and publicans. I know the Nation I am addressing: it will forgive me the application I make to it of the Oracle of Christ: The weak spurn at truth and reject it; by the Englishman it is honored and embraced. If he does not discover it in what is presented to him, he does not on that account entertain the less esteem for him, who thinks he has made it manifest, and who does it with the sole design of serving him. Perhaps I shall not be heard in vain: perhaps the day will come (may Heaven accelerate it!) when men will cease to be indifferent to a reunion so long desired by all good men. That happy day will be, when men shall feel that political unity, the impregnable

rampart of states, is never so solidly cemented as by religious unity: that will be the day, when men will pursue less eagerly the little comforts and conveniences of this miserable life, and attach less importance to gold and silver; when the affairs and pleasures of this world, occupying less the thoughts of man, will leave the first place to reflections upon futurity, and when forming the most reasonable judgment of things, men shall prefer that which continues to that which passes away, a happiness without end to the enjoyments of a moment, the salvation of our immortal soul to the well-being of a body, which, notwithstanding all our care, gradually proceeds to its rapid and inevitable decay; that day will be, when these words of our Saviour, shall be universally heard and felt; “What doth it avail a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”¹

Who can be more anxious than I myself am to see that splendid day rising upon your country, I, who, for so many years, have cherished the hope of it in my heart, and who, by a kind of irresistible impulse, have turned my thoughts towards this reciprocal approximation—I, who am reminded by the blood that flows in my veins, that my origin is common with yours—I, who esteemed England, before I had seen it, and who esteem and love it, since I have become acquainted with it, and since the hospitality and kindness with which it has been pleased to honor my countrymen? I have endeavored to pay some part of our debt, by offering to it this tribute of my labor. O that I could have rendered it more deserving of its attention!

¹ “May the moment, which seems fast approaching, when all the faithful, united in the same faith, hope and charity, and under the same pastor, shall form but one and the same flock!” Admirable words, written by a royal hand, and worthy to be exposed to every eye in letters of gold! O that the Christian universe would awake and be roused from its lethargic indifference, by the voice of the magnanimous sovereign, who so nobly invites it to unity!—Letter of the King of Prussia to the Consistories, Synods, &c., of his States, Sept. 27th, 1817.

Undoubtedly, in the mind of his majesty as well as in ours, the only pastor is eminently Jesus Christ. But in our mind, as no doubt in the mind of the monarch also, it is necessary that the eternal and invisible pastor should have upon earth a visible vicar, in order that *all* may be able to see him at their head, and move at his command.

In conclusion, if my hand has traced a single word, which could give offence, I declare that I had never an intention so to do; and I beg to make hereby a sincere apology. I have not to fear that my own country should blame me for the prayers I put up for her rival. My country is too noble not to esteem a grateful heart, and not to be convinced that national variances are not to extinguish in individuals the remembrance of benefits received: moreover, where governments see nothing but enemies, religion ever beholds brethren.¹

As for you, my dear Sir, wait not for the moment of a general reconciliation in order to accomplish your own. The movement of nations is slow, because their existence is long: ages are their years. Individuals appear for a moment upon the stage, and are seen no more. Their days are numbered, and are painful and short. Truth has displayed herself to you: more than once have you acknowledged this in our mutual communications. What shall now withhold you? Were it necessary for you to renounce dignity, honors, and fortune, and to throw yourself and family into poverty and degradation, even then your delay would admit of no excuse: for what are riches and dignities? what is the world and its perishable pomp, when compared with an eternal recompense? In that case, however, I could conceive a motive for your hesitation, though I could not but lament it. But, thanks to Providence, you have none of those shackles, those powerful chains, which require a more than ordinary fortitude of soul to shake off. You are the complete master of your actions and your fortune.

Your relations and friends will be afflicted at the step you will have taken. I know the sensibility of your soul; I see to what severe trials it will be put. But Heaven must be purchased, and it is well worth the sacrifices which God requires at our hands. No doubt you are bound to pay every regard to the tender feelings of your relations and friends, and to the prejudices of education, which you have a long time shared with them. Redouble your interest and friendship in their regard; let them

¹ This was written during the war, in 1813.

discover your change chiefly by your increased attention to their happiness. Do more: pray with fervor for them, and encourage them to become the judges between themselves and you, by examining and weighing your motives. If they agree to this: if they enter calmly and sincerely into the examination, which we have just completed, there is reason to hope that their complaints will daily diminish, and that, after having blamed your conduct, they will conclude, with the divine grace, by approving and imitating it.¹

Reader, pray for me.

“Omnes qui retro oderant, quia ignorabant, simul ac desinunt ignorare, cessant et odisse.” Tert. *Apolog.*

THE END.





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